

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, April 19, 1999
Volume 35—Number 15
Pages 623–670

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Editor's Note: The President was in Detroit, MI, on April 16, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under

regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for \$80.00 per year (\$137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for \$93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is \$3.00 (\$3.75 for foreign mailing).

There are no restrictions on the republication of material appearing in the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*.

Week Ending Friday, April 16, 1999

Remarks on the Patients' Bill of Rights in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

April 9, 1999

Thank you, Joan, for making the trip up here and for your very, very moving account of your experience. I want to thank all of you who have come here today—John Sweeney, and Congressmen Brady, Borski, and Fattah; Congresswoman DeLauro; my good friend Congressman Dingell who flew up with me this morning; and Congressman Dave Bonior.

I'd like to thank the other Members of Congress who are here: Congressmen Ron Klink and Joe Hoeffel, from Pennsylvania; Congressmen Donald Payne and Rob Andrews from New Jersey; Congresswomen Carolyn Maloney, Carolyn McCarthy, Congressman Joe Crowley from New York; Congressman Ted Strickland from Ohio. That's a pretty impressive group, and we had Congressman Pallone here a little earlier, from New Jersey. I thank them all.

I also want to thank Judy Lichtman from the National Partnership for Women and Families; Ron Pollack and Families USA; Fran Visco and the National Breast Cancer Coalition; Beverly Malone and the American Nurses Association. And there are 150 other provider, consumer, and patient organizations, all of them working for the Patients' Bill of Rights. I thank them all. That's very, very impressive.

I want to thank the local Pennsylvania leaders who are here: Senator Schwartz; Senator Fumo; former Congresswoman Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky; Representative Bill DeWeese, the Democratic House leader. And I think the city council president is here, Anna Verna, and other members of the Philadelphia City Council. I thank them all for coming.

But I want to say a special word of congratulations to the mayor. This is the last year of his term. You know, I was a Governor for

a dozen years, and I loved every day of it. And in the late 1970's and early 1980's, most of the new ideas for what we should be doing as a people were coming out of the Governors' mansions of the country. In the 1990's, most of the new ideas and most of the innovations have come out of the mayors' offices. There's not a better mayor in America than Ed Rendell, and I'm very proud of him. I also want you to know that he has worried me to death on a number of issues for Philadelphia—[laughter]—but none more than the Philadelphia Navy Yard. And I am so glad we got that worked out, so that the city can be—[applause]—

And you know, I've been working on this Patients' Bill of Rights for a long time. And I've listened to all the Members of Congress speak, to my good friend John Sweeney, to the mayor, and to Joan, and—did you watch the Oscars? You know, where Benigni, that great Italian actor says, the second time they called him up, he said, "This is a terrible mistake. I used up all my English!" [Laughter] They used up all my English! [Laughter] They have said everything that needs to be said.

But I would like to make a couple of points, to hammer home what this is about and why we're here. First of all, we're here in Philadelphia, as has been said, not only because it is the home of the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, it was also, interestingly enough, the home of the very first petition drive. Back in 1701, the citizens of Philadelphia launched what I think was the first successful petition drive in the New World, when they asserted and won the full and unfettered right to practice whatever religion they chose.

Philadelphia, thanks to Ben Franklin, was the home of America's first hospital, later America's first medical school and first nursing school, still one of the most important medical centers not only in the United States but in the world.

Now, this petition, as Rosa DeLauro said when she gave you the right address, is a little bit more modern. But we have to do it. And I'd like to say why and what the larger stakes are and go back over this one more time.

Why are we having to do this petition? I mean, this is a bill supported by over 70 percent of the American people and by almost equal margins, in every research document, almost equal margins, by Republicans and Democrats and independents. As a matter of fact, it is virtually the only issue that I have worked on in the last 5 years where there is almost no difference by party in levels of support, except in Washington, DC.

Now, why is that? That's because the people who are against it, basically the large HMO's, the insurers, have got the ear of the congressional majority, and they have a lot of political influence. And how Washington works, for good or ill, is that—people say, "Well, who cares if there are a lot of people for it, this is not very high up on their scale. The economy's doing fine. Most people are all right. There aren't all that many stories like Joan's. We'll let this slide."

Now, that's what's going on here. We need this petition drive because unless there is a clear, unambiguous signal from the people of the United States not just that we want this, not just that we need this, not just that we believe in this—the organized forces of the status quo will do nothing. They will say, "Oh, well, the President went to Philadelphia, and he brought all the Congress Members here. And there were 100 Members of Congress around the country, but they probably can't break through on the evening news tonight because of Kosovo." That's another excuse we'll have to let this thing slide.

You know, this is the kind of thing you can do when you're not running for office anymore. You can be more frank with people. *[Laughter]* I'm just telling you, that's what's going on.

Now, I have talked about this until I am blue in the face. I have met with people like Joan, and I have heard these stories. And I want you to know that I feel a special responsibility to do this, because I don't oppose all managed care. I think managed care has done some good in this country. Health care

costs were going up at 3 times the rate of inflation when I became President. It was going to bankrupt the country. We should want all organizations, including health care organizations, run as efficiently as possible. But every organization that forgets its primary purpose is doomed to fail. The primary purpose is not to deliver cheap health care; the primary purpose is to deliver quality health care as inexpensively as possible.

Now, I wish we had somebody here representing the other side, standing here beside another microphone. Here's what they would say. They'd say, "Well, Mr. President, that's very compelling, and you got a nice applause line. But the truth is there are just hard decisions, and you've got to decide whether you want to bankrupt us or not, and this Patients' Bill of Rights will bankrupt us." So let me make a countercase.

Here's what we asked for in the bill. Number one, the right to have a specialist when you need it. That's Joan's story, right? She got the specialist, all right, after she lost her sight. I've sat with people who got the specialist after their loved one lost their life or when it was too late to do the medical procedure. Because the way these things are organized—you heard John talk about his doctor friend who got fired—if you're down the chain in the review process in one of these organizations, you just know one thing: You are never going to get in trouble for saying no.

You know, put yourself in the position of a young person working for an HMO; suppose you've got a little kid; suppose you're worried about your Christmas bonus; suppose you've got to save your job. You will never get in trouble if you say no, because you say, "Well, they can always appeal it to somebody else higher." So delay is one of the biggest problems here—the right to see a specialist when you need it.

The right to emergency room care, wherever and whenever you need it. I know you find this hard to believe if it's never happened to you, but Philadelphia's a pretty big city, with a lot of hospitals. If you get hurt on one side of Philadelphia, and the hospital that your HMO works with is on the other side, they can go past three hospitals after you've been hit by a car. That's wrong. You

know, that may not seem like a big deal unless that happens to you, but that's wrong.

The right to have your doctor level with you and discuss all your treatment options. The right to a timely and independent appeals process. The right to hold your plan accountable if it causes you or a loved one harm. The right to know—this is a big deal—the right to know that you won't be forced to switch doctors in the middle of a treatment, like a pregnancy or a chemotherapy treatment.

That may seem unbelievable, but a lot of employers, particularly smaller employers—to be fair to them, they have to change their providers from time to time. They're always struggling to try to get affordable coverage. All we say is, "Okay, nobody wants to stop you from changing your providers, but if one of your employees is 7 months into a pregnancy, or another one is halfway through a chemotherapy treatment, then the provider, the new provider can't force them to change the people that are giving them the health care." It seems to me that this is basic human decency.

Now, we have worked hard to do our part and to try to honestly explore the contention of the opponents of this bill that this is going to cost them too much money. We are the single largest buyer, the Federal Government, of private health insurance. Today—today—we are completing the process of giving the 9 million men, women, and children who receive their health benefits through the Federal Government all the vital patient protections recommended by the Health Care Quality Commission. We're informing—listen to this—all 285 companies who provide coverage for Federal employees that if they want to do business with us, they've got to add the last two of our protections.

We've already imposed the rest of the requirements; now we're saying you can't make people switch doctors in the middle of treatment, and you have to provide full disclosure of what the plans cover, what incentives are offered to doctors, and how satisfied other patients have been with their care.

Now, here is the important point. This is the answer to the opponents of our bill. A new analysis by the Office of Personnel Management—Janice Lachance, the head of that

office, is here with me today—shows that providing all these protections—listen to this—all these protections will cost less than \$1 per person per month—less than \$1 per person, per month. I think that is worth it to stop the story that Joan just told us, and the hundreds of stories around this country.

Now, today, the Republican leadership in the House is not even debating a comprehensive bill. In the Senate the leadership plan does not ensure access to specialists, does not prevent the health care plans from forcing you to change doctors in mid-treatment, does not give you adequate recourse if your health plan fails to provide adequate care, and because it applies only to self-insured plans, actually leaves more than 120 million patients without all these guarantees.

Now, this is a clear choice. But again, I say, this does not need to be a partisan issue. This is not a partisan issue anywhere in America, but Washington, DC. I've heard tell that most doctors are Republicans, but the AMA is for this. The Nurses Association is for this. The health care providers are for this. And I'm telling you a lot of us who have supported the idea of more efficient management of the health care system are for it. What is the purpose of the health care system? It is quality health care at the least cost.

Now, let me just ask you one last thing. Everybody says, anybody says, "Well, one of the things that worries me about the modern world is that we're going to leave people behind." Well, I've been working for 6 years to stop that. You heard the major mention Chakah Fattah's work with us to try to make sure all of our kids can go to college. We changed the law so that we wouldn't leave anybody behind; everybody could afford to go to college.

We talked about this part of Philadelphia being in the empowerment zone. We are now offering to Congress a new market initiative to bring jobs to the poorest part of America by giving people who invest in those areas the same incentives we give them if they invest in some other country—to have the same incentive to invest in America and create jobs, to close the job gap in America.

So we've got to close the education gap; we've got to close the job gap; we've got to close the technology gap. But this is closing

the health care gap. Do you know what would happen to me this afternoon if I started having the symptoms Joan did? Do you have any idea what would happen to me? Within 15 minutes, I'd be on a helicopter; within half an hour I'd be there. I would have whatever specialist was needed, and I would get it. And when I'm gone from the Presidency, because I'll have a good pension, and if, God willing, I stay healthy, a decent income, the same thing would happen. Maybe it would take an hour longer. Not a month longer. [*Laughter*]

Now, we can laugh about this, because sometimes it hurts too much to cry. But I am telling you, the political reality is that the system believes it can resist the opinion and the desire of the American people. That is what this petition drive is all about.

And don't you think it won't make a difference. This could be a good education for a lot of people all over America. They could teach people how to use the Internet for the first time by putting their name on this petition. We ought to have schoolchildren doing it. We ought to have civic clubs doing it. We ought to have religious organizations doing it. People ought to be accessing—this could be their first experience on the Internet

But the reason we are here, the true, honest-to-goodness reason we're here is that everybody knows we need to do it; we have now proved we can afford to do it; the whole country is for it; the system in Washington is resisting it; and the people still rule if they will make their voices heard loud enough. Stand up and be heard.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:57 p.m. in the Great Hall at Memorial Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Joan Bleakly, a patient who was denied access to a specialist; John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO; Judith L. Lichtman, president, National Partnership for Women and Families; Ronald F. Pollack, vice president and executive director, Families USA; Frances M. Visco, president, National Breast Cancer Coalition; Beverly L. Malone, president, American Nurses Association; State Senator Allyson Y. Schwartz; State Representative H. William DeWeese, Democratic House leader; Anna C. Verna, president, Philadelphia City Council; Mayor Edward Rendell of Philadelphia; and actor-director Roberto Benigni.

This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

April 10, 1999

Good morning. Today I want to talk to you about our continuing efforts to break the cycle of dependency and make responsibility and work a way of life for all Americans.

Work is more than just a weekly paycheck. It is, at heart, our way of life. Work lends purpose and dignity to our lives, instills in our children the basic values that built our Nation. But for too long, too many Americans were trapped in a broken welfare system that exiled generation after generation from the mainstream of American life by cutting them off from the world of work.

I took office determined to change that, from giving States the flexibility they needed to make welfare a second chance, not a way of life, to passing the historic bipartisan welfare reform bill that ended welfare as we knew it, to launching the Welfare to Work partnership to create private sector jobs for welfare recipients. We have made remarkable progress.

Today I am pleased to announce that since 1993, we cut the welfare rolls nearly in half by a record 6½ million people. Thanks to our strong economy and strong leadership in the States and the private sector, the number of Americans who are beginning to replace welfare checks with paychecks has tripled since 1992. I'm proud to announce that we in the National Government are doing our part to help, surpassing the goal we set for ourselves by hiring almost 12,000 welfare recipients in just 2 years.

You can see the evidence of our progress in communities across our country, in hard-pressed neighborhoods where bus drivers who used to pass by empty stations now report their buses are filled with people on their way to work. You can see it on inner-city streets where new storefront tax preparing businesses are helping people file their income tax returns, some for the very first time in their lives. April 15th may not be the most favorite day for Americans, but for these people it's a cause for celebration.

Reforming our broken welfare system was the right thing to do. Now we must finish the job. Today I am pleased to unveil the final rules that will carry out the welfare reform bill I signed into law in 1996. This major new regulation does two important things. First, it enforces strict State work requirements and holds States accountable for moving people from the welfare rolls to the workplace. Second, the new regulation makes it easier for States to use their welfare block grant to pay for child care, for transportation, for job retention services, to help people who have left welfare stay off the rolls and help families from going on welfare in the first place.

This regulation says loud and clear: People ought to get paychecks, not welfare checks. But to finish the job on welfare reform, we must press on in our efforts to restore responsibility and make work a way of life again for all Americans. Now, in this time of great prosperity, with our economy booming and our confidence high, we can't afford to leave anyone behind.

One of the biggest obstacles facing all working families is finding child care they can afford and trust. I'm pleased that the Senate recently approved with bipartisan support significant new funding to help low income families pay for child care. I hope Congress takes this critical step to give America's working families the support they need to thrive. Frankly, I hope they will also pass the rest of my child care proposal to give tax credits and other support to working families. That will help more people move from welfare to work and stay off welfare.

Finally, we can't finish the job of welfare reform without doing more to help people who have the hardest time moving from welfare to work, those who live in the poorest neighborhoods and have the poorest job skills. That's why I call on Congress to pass my plan to extend the Labor Department's Welfare to Work program and to fully fund my proposal to provide transportation grants and housing vouchers that will help more Americans leave welfare behind by getting from where they are to where the jobs are.

With these steps, we can make the legacy of welfare dependency a memory of the 20th

century and build a community of work and responsibility in the 21st century.

Thank for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:50 p.m. on April 9 in the administrative offices of Memorial Hall in Philadelphia, PA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Joint Statement by President Bill Clinton and Premier Zhu Rongji

April 10, 1999

On the occasion of the signing of the Agreement on U.S. China Agricultural Cooperation, President Bill Clinton and Premier Zhu Rongji reaffirmed that the United States and the People's Republic of China have advanced substantially their common goal of China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). This Agreement and the significant consensus achieved on a broad range of market access and Protocol issues have further advanced that goal. President Clinton and Premier Zhu welcome this significant progress. The United States strongly supports the accession of the People's Republic of China to the WTO in 1999. Therefore, President Clinton and Premier Zhu instruct their trade ministers to continue bilateral negotiations in order to satisfactorily resolve the important remaining issues and reach agreement on strong commercial terms as soon as possible.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the Observance of Orthodox Easter

April 11, 1999

I wish to send a warm message of greetings today to the 6 million Orthodox Christian Americans and the quarter-billion Orthodox Christians around the world, as they gather to proclaim that "Christ has Risen."

I know the feeling of joy that comes on Easter Sunday, when we celebrate the miracle of Jesus' Resurrection and His gift to

us of eternal life. Yet I also understand that on this particular Easter Sunday, the joy Orthodox Christians feel may be mixed with other emotions: with sadness over the tragic events in and around Kosovo; and with fear for those whose lives may still be in danger. The majority of those forced from Kosovo in the last 2 weeks are Muslim, but among them are Catholics and Orthodox Christians, too. Our hearts and prayers must go out to all who have suffered. We hope and pray for the restoration of peace and a resolution based on democracy and tolerance.

On this holiest of days, when Orthodox Christians celebrate the triumph of life over death, of hope over despair, let us recommit to seeking peace, human rights, and an end to suffering for people around the world.

**Remarks to the Community at
Barksdale Air Force Base in
Bossier City, Louisiana**

April 12, 1999

Thank you very much. Let me begin by thanking Secretary Cohen and General Shelton for their truly outstanding leadership on behalf of our Nation's military. They are eloquent and profound representatives of what is best about this country, and I thank them.

I want to thank Senator Breaux, Senator Landrieu, Representative McCrery for their support for you and for our country. I would like to acknowledge in the audience today, or here with us, are other Members of Congress: Congressmen Bill Jefferson and Chris John from Louisiana; and Congressman Thornberry and Congressman Sandlin, who come from the neighboring State of Texas to be with us. So I thank all of them for their support.

I would like to thank the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Mike Ryan, for coming down here with me; the Acting Secretary of the Air Force, Whitt Peters; my National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger. We also have the FEMA Director here, James Lee Witt, because, you know, you've had some pretty tough natural disasters here recently, and we're here doing double duty.

And General Marcotte and General Smoak, thank you for welcoming me here and for giving me the chance to meet with some of the fine people with whom you work who have also been involved in our work over Kosovo.

I thank the adjutant general, Bennett Landreneau, who is representing Governor Foster; Treasurer Ken Duncan; and the mayor of Bossier City, George Dement; and the mayor of Shreveport, Keith Hightower, for coming to meet me as well.

Now, the nice thing about speaking last is that everything that needs to be said has been said, but not everyone has said it. *[Laughter]* What I would like to do is to be just serious for a moment and first thank all the previous speakers for what they have said and try to put this in some larger context.

The conflict in Kosovo in which we are involved is really about two things: first, what you know and see every night—all those hundreds of thousands of innocent people uprooted, many of them killed, some of them dying from disease in refugee camps, some families divided forever—not because of anything they did, but because they happen to be Albanian instead of Serbian; Muslim instead of Orthodox Christian. It is a human tragedy that touches everyone.

But there is a second issue here, as well, and that is whether we and our allies in Europe are going to allow that kind of problem—hatred based on race or ethnicity or religion—to be the defining force of the next 20 or 30 years. In other words, whether we're going to go into the 21st century, this great modern time, where all our kids can do amazing things on the Internet, where all of our planes can do amazing things with high technology, and have all of the tools of the modern world put at the service of the most primitive hatreds known to man, or whether our European allies—18 other countries in NATO and their friends and sympathizers across Europe—will stay united with us, and with our neighbors to the north in Canada, and say, "We would like the 21st century to be different for our children. We would like to nip this conflict in the bud before it destabilizes all of Europe. We would like to see us make a statement that we don't want the 21st century to be defined, and we don't want

American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, to die on distant battlefields in large numbers because we walked away from these ethnic, religious, and racial atrocities." And that's what's going on.

Now, I wanted to come here to Barksdale today for two reasons. One is, you're involved with the B-52's and what we're trying to achieve there. The other is, Barksdale has a rich heritage of being part of an allied effort, where America does not act alone but with others who love freedom and are prepared to defend it.

This base was named for Lieutenant Eugene Barksdale of the U.S. Army Air Corps, who flew combat missions alongside British pilots in World War I with enormous skill and bravery. This base was where Jimmy Doolittle's famed bomber unit and so many others, including French pilots, trained to fight for freedom in World War II. It was from this base during the very large coalition effort in the Gulf war that crews launched the longest strike mission in the history of aerial combat, 35 nonstop hours in the air, when B-52's left Barksdale to strike at Saddam Hussein's war machine and returned safely here.

Now you have this new mission, one that echoes the allied achievements of the past and embodies our determination to create a better future. As I said, I met earlier with aircrews who have returned from Kosovo, where, with the aircraft from other NATO countries, they struck at the Serbian forces who have so brutally attacked the civilian population of Kosovo.

The forces are working to save innocent lives, to protect the peace and freedom and stability of Europe, to stand against the notion that it's okay to uproot, destroy, and murder people because of their race, ethnic background, or religion.

I am grateful for your service and grateful for the sacrifice of your families. We are all—those of us in positions of responsibility—committed to support you. I listened very, very carefully today when the crewmembers talked to me about the challenges of maintaining a long-term career in the military today, about the challenges they face, the challenges their families face, the challenges that relate to income, the challenges that re-

late to health care, the challenges that relate to housing, the challenges that relate to operations tempo.

We are working on that. We know that, now that we have downsized the military and the economy in the civilian sector has picked up, we're going to have to work harder to get and keep good people. Our new budget provides for an increase in pay and more money for housing and other quality-of-life supports, for more support for training and equipment. It is the first sustained increase in overall defense spending since 1985.

There's something else that, since it is now April the 12th, I think I ought to do. Our tax laws give the President the authority to issue an Executive order granting tax benefits to Americans serving in a combat zone or supporting combat efforts. I want you to know that I will issue that Executive order for our forces who are working to save Kosovo.

This will mean that for military personnel serving in the combat zone, most or all pay for each month served will be tax-free, not withheld from paychecks, not subject to IRS claims later. They will also be eligible for some additional pay for service.

There's another advantage to the Executive order that will apply not only to personnel in the combat zone and others deployed overseas but also for some civilian personnel as well, including accredited journalists and relief workers. It will suspend the time for filing tax returns and related obligations to the IRS. With our citizens working so hard to protect the people of Kosovo, they shouldn't have to worry about their taxes.

Now, Secretary Cohen will work out all the details with the Treasury Department as soon as possible. *[Laughter]* He's got 72 hours. *[Laughter]* You all have to have quicker turnaround than that. So he's going to fight with the tax person for you.

Let me say again, I know I speak for all of the Members of Congress here in saying they support this. We have had remarkable bipartisan support from the leadership in Congress for this—Congressmen Archer and Rangel, Senators Roth and Moynihan, who have made it quite clear that they support what we are doing.

Let me just say one other word or two about this mission, because more of you will be going in the days ahead. Hundreds of thousands of these Kosovars are now refugees. There have been thousands of innocent victims. Many are just dying because they're stuck in these refugee camps and can't get adequate health care or support; some of them from severe dehydration. There is also the possibility that Albania, Macedonia, and other countries around there receiving these refugees will be destabilized because they have ethnic problems of their own. There are also countries, believe it or not, in the Balkans that have worked hard to resolve their ethnic differences, and they have things going pretty well. Pretty soon, their malcontents may wonder whether they could have gotten a better deal by behaving in a more destructive way.

We've learned the hard way through two World Wars and through what we saw in Bosnia that with these kinds of conflicts, if you don't halt them, they spread, to be stopped later at greater cost and greater risk.

I have worked hard for the last 6 years to build in the aftermath of the cold war a Europe that is united, democratic, and at peace for the first time in history. The two great World Wars of the 20th century started in Europe. We have learned that so much of our liberty, our safety, our prosperity depends upon an alliance with a democratic Europe. That's what NATO has been all about.

We know in the years ahead, when we're going to have to fight terrorism, when we're going to have to fight organized crime and drug trafficking, when we're going to have to fight the spread of weapons of mass destruction, when we're going to have to join together with countries to fight the spread of disease and environmental problems across national boundaries, that we will have to work with Europe.

That is why we have taken new members into NATO. That is why we've established new partnerships with many other countries across the whole expanse of Europe. That's why we are adopting new missions, to be ready when somewhere, someone again challenges the peace and stability of Europe. That is what Mr. Milosevic has done.

Keep in mind, before Kosovo, he started wars of ethnic hatred in Croatia and in Bosnia, with a quarter of a million killed and more than 2 million refugees. And the fighting there did not end until we and our allies acted.

Now, we did everything we could possibly do to avoid the conflict which is now occurring. We worked and worked and worked for a peaceful solution. Last year we stopped the threatened assault in October. We had a peace agreement. The Kosovar Albanians agreed to sign it, even though it didn't give them everything they wanted. Mr. Milosevic rejected it because he had 40,000 troops and nearly 300 tanks on the border and already in Kosovo, and he knew that he could move his troops and his tanks at will and do to the Kosovars what he had supported being done to the other ethnic minorities in the former Yugoslavia.

The stories we are hearing now are truly chilling: Serb security forces herding Albanian villagers together, gunning them down with automatic weapons, and setting them on fire; telling villagers, "Leave or we will kill you;" separating family members; loading up buses and trains, carrying some to the borders and some to be slaughtered; confiscating identity papers and property records, seeking, literally, to erase the presence of these people in their own land forever.

We must not let that happen. We must stand against that. As I speak, Secretary Albright and the other NATO foreign ministers are in Brussels, reaffirming our common commitment to do what is necessary to prevail.

There are a lot of people who didn't think that an alliance of 19 countries could do what we have done and could stay together as we have stayed together, would have the patience to endure the inevitable progress that the tanks and the pre-positioned troops would make and the patience to deal with the bad weather and the patience to deal with all the questions to stay the course. But when American B-52's like the ones here at Barksdale take to the skies, they're joined by British Harrier jets, German and Italian Tornados, French Mirages, Canadian and Spanish F-18's, Dutch, Danish, Belgian,

Norwegian, Portuguese, and Turkish F-16's. We are united in this effort.

And we are united in our humanitarian effort. And I say to all of you: I am very proud of you. I hope you are proud of your mission. This is America at its best. We seek no territorial gain; we seek no political advantage. We have promised, if we are a part of a multinational force in Kosovo, we will protect the Serb minority with exactly the same vigilance as we stand up for the Kosovar Albanian majority. This is America trying to get the world to live on human terms, so we can have peace and freedom in Europe, and our people will not be called to fight a wider war for someone else's madness. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. [Applause]

I also want to thank the American people for their work in the humanitarian relief effort, and I thank our forces for their support. Thousands and thousands of Americans have called the number I announced a week ago, the 1-800-USAID-RELIEF. It's hard to believe; it's an 11-digit 1-800 number, but it works.

A pastor friend of mine called me the other day to say, just spontaneously, his church had taken up a donation for the relief in Kosovo and had collected \$15,000 last Sunday. This kind of thing is happening all over America, and I am very grateful for that.

As I said, our Government is doing its part there, and when I introduced Mr. Witt, I said that we are trying to do our part in helping Louisiana deal with its disaster, as well, expanding aid and individual assistance for families in affected parishes. It's ironic, but I think it's appropriate that under the leadership of Mr. Witt, our Federal Emergency Management Agency is playing a vital role in both the Kosovo relief efforts and the work here in Louisiana today.

Let me say one final word: Mr. Milosevic can end this tragedy tomorrow. What has to be done is clear: Withdraw the forces, as he, himself, promised to do last October; have the refugees come home freely and in security; establish an international force to protect all the people of Kosovo, of whatever ethnic or religious group; and let the people begin to work toward the self-government that they were promised and then robbed of years ago.

This is not complicated. The United States seeks no territorial advantage. I will say again: Europe seeks only stability, security, freedom, and democracy for those people. He can end it tomorrow. But until he does, he should be under no illusions that we will end it from weariness. We are determined to continue on this mission. And we will prevail because of you and people like you.

The last thing I want to say is something you know very well here at Barksdale. You are the proud heirs of a great tradition, a tradition of serving the United States, and a tradition, as I said at the beginning of my remarks, of doing it in cooperation with freedom-loving allies from other nations. You are doing it again. Make no mistake about it. You are doing two things: You are trying to save the lives of innocent people, and you are trying to do it in a way that creates a 21st century world that you can be proud to have your children live in.

Thank you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m., in an outdoor area at Hogan Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. Ronald C. Marcotte, USAF, Commander, 8th Air Force; Brig. Gen. Andrew W. Smoak, USAF, Commander, 2d Bomb Wing; Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, USA, adjutant general, Louisiana National Guard; Gov. Mike Foster of Louisiana; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks at the Seventh Millennium Evening at the White House

April 12, 1999

[The First Lady began the program making brief remarks and introducing Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel, the evening's featured speaker, who then made remarks.]

The President. Ladies and gentleman, we have all been moved by one more profound example of Elie Wiesel's lifetime of bearing witness.

Before we open the floor for questions, and especially because of the current events in Kosovo, I would like to ask you to think about what he has just said in terms of what it means to the United States, in particular,

and to the world in which we would like our children to live in the new century.

How do we avoid indifference to human suffering? How do we muster both the wisdom and the strength to know when to act and whether there are circumstances in which we should not? Why are we in Kosovo?

The history of our country for quite a long while had been dominated by a principle of non-intervention in the affairs of other nations. Indeed, for most of our history we have worn that principle as a badge of honor, for our Founders knew intervention as a fundamentally destructive force. George Washington warned us against those "entangling alliances."

The 20th century, with its two World Wars, the cold war, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Panama, Lebanon, Grenada, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, it changed all that. For good or ill, it changed all that. Our steadily increasing involvement in the rest of the world, not for territorial gain but for peace and freedom and security, is a fact of recent history.

In the cold war, it might be argued that on occasion we made a wrong judgment, because we saw the world through communist and noncommunist lenses. But no one doubts that we never sought territorial advantage. No one doubts that when we did get involved, we were doing what at least we thought was right for humanity.

Now, at the end of the 20th century, it seems to me we face a great battle of the forces of integration against the forces of disintegration, of globalism versus tribalism, of oppression against empowerment. And this phenomenal explosion of technology might be the servant of either side or both.

The central irony of our time, it seems to me, is this: Most of us have this vision of a 21st century world with the triumph of peace and prosperity and personal freedom; with the respect for the integrity of ethnic, racial, and religious minorities; within a framework of shared values, shared power, shared plenty; making common cause against disease and environmental degradation across national lines, against terror, organized crime, weapons of mass destruction. This vision, ironically, is threatened by the oldest demon of human society: our vulnerability

to hatred of the other. In the face of that, we cannot be indifferent, at home or abroad. That is why we are in Kosovo.

We first have to set an example, as best we can, standing against hate crimes against racial minorities or gays, standing for respect, for diversity. Second, we have to act responsibly, recognizing this unique and, if history is any guide, fleeting position the United States now enjoys of remarkable military, political, and economic influence. We have to do what we can to protect the circle of humanity against those who would divide it by dehumanizing the other. Lord knows we have had enough of that in this century, and Elie talked about it.

I think it is well to point out that Henry Luce coined the term, "the American Century," way back in 1941. A lot of terrible things have happened since then, but a lot of good things have happened as well. And we should be grateful that, for most of the time since, our Nation has had both the power and the willingness to stand up against the horrors of the century, not every time, not every place, not even always with success, but we've done enough good to say that America has made a positive difference.

From our successes and from our failures, we know there are hard questions that have to be asked when you move beyond the values and the principles to the murky circumstances of daily life. We can't, perhaps, intervene everywhere, but we must always be alive to the possibility of preventing death and oppression and forging and strengthening institutions and alliances to make a good outcome more likely.

Elie has said that Kosovo is not the Holocaust but that the distinction should not deter us from doing what is right. I agree on both counts. When we see people forced from their homes at gunpoint, loaded onto train cars, their identity papers confiscated, their very presence blotted from the historical record, it is only natural that we would think of the events which Elie has chronicled tonight in his own life.

We must always remain awake to the warning signs of evil. And now, we know that it is possible to act before it is too late.

The efforts of Holocaust survivors to make us remember and help us understand, therefore, have not been in vain. The people who fought those battles and lived those tragedies, however, will not be around forever. More than a thousand World War II veterans pass away every day. But they can live on in our determination to preserve what they gave us and to stand against the modern incarnations of the evil they defeated.

Some say—and perhaps there will be some discussion about it tonight—that evil is an active presence, always seeking new opportunities to manifest itself. As a boy growing up in my Baptist church, I heard quite a lot of sermons about that. Other theologians, like Niebuhr, Martin Luther King, argued that evil was more the absence of something, a lack of knowledge, a failure of will, a poverty of the imagination, or a condition of indifference.

None of this answers any of the difficult questions that a Kosovo, a Bosnia, a Rwanda present. But Kosovo is at the doorstep or the underbelly of NATO and its wide number of allies. We have military assets and allies willing to do their part. President Milosevic clearly has established a pattern of perfidy, earlier in Bosnia and elsewhere. And so we act.

I would say there are two caveats that we ought to observe. First of all, any military action, any subsequent peacekeeping force, cannot cause ancient grudges and freshly opened wounds to heal overnight. But we can make it more likely that people will resolve their differences by force of argument rather than force of arms and, in so doing, learn to live together. That is what Romania and Hungary have done recently, with their differences. It is what many Bosnian Croats, Serbs, and Muslims are struggling to do every day.

Second, we should not fall victim to the easy tendency to demonize the Serbian people. They were our allies in World War II; they have their own legitimate concerns. Any international force going into Kosovo to maintain the peace must be dedicated also to protecting the Serbian minority from those who may wish to take their vengeance.

But we cannot be indifferent to the fact that the Serbian leader has defined destiny

as a license to kill. Destiny, instead, is what people make for themselves, with a decent respect for the legitimate interests and rights of others.

In his first lecture here, the first millennium lecture, the distinguished historian, Bernard Bailyn, argued how much we are still shaped by the ideals of our Founding Fathers and by their realism, their deeply practical understanding of human nature, their understanding of the possibility of evil. They understood difficult moral judgments. They understood that to be indifferent is to be numb. They knew, too, that our people would never be immune to those who seek power by playing on our own hatreds and fears and that we had more to learn about the true meaning of liberty, equality, and the pursuit of happiness.

Here in this house, we have tried to advance those ideals with our initiative against hate crime, the race initiative, AmeriCorps, the stand against the hatred that brought us Oklahoma City and paramilitary groups, the efforts to forge peace for Northern Ireland to the Middle East.

But our challenge now, and the world's, is to harmonize diversity and integration, to build a richly textured fabric of civilization that will make the most of God's various gifts, and that will resist those who would tear that fabric apart by appealing to the dark recesses that often seem to lurk in even the strongest souls.

To succeed, we must heed the wisdom of our Founders about power and ambition. We must have the compassion and determination of Abraham Lincoln to always give birth to new freedom. We must have the vision of President Roosevelt, who proclaimed four freedoms for all human beings and invited the United States to defend them at home and around the world.

Now, we close out this chapter of our history determined not to turn away from the horrors we leave behind but to act on their lessons with principle and purpose. If that is what we are, in fact, doing, Kosovo could be a very good place to begin a new century.

Thank you very much. *[Applause]* Thank you.

We have hundreds of questions—I know. Ellen, do you want to describe what we're going to do?

Ellen Lovell. Well, I think, Mr. President, you have a question for Mr. Wiesel. And then I'm going to begin the questioning from the room, and Mrs. Clinton will take the questions from the Internet.

The President. I would like to ask you a question about what you think the impact of the modern media and sort of instantaneous news coverage will be. It is obvious to me that we built a consensus in the United States and throughout Europe for action in Bosnia in no small measure because of what people saw was going on there. It is obvious to me that the support in the United States and Europe for our actions in Kosovo have increased because of what people see going on.

And I think I worry about two things, and I just would like to hear your thoughts on it. Number one, is there a chance that people will become inured to this level of human suffering by constant exposure to it? And number two, is there a chance that even though people's interest in humanity can be quickened, almost overnight, that we're so used to having a new story every day, that we may not have the patience to pay the price of time to deal with this and other challenges? A lot of these things require weeks and months, indeed years, of effort. And that seems to be inconsistent with, kind of, rapid-fire new news we are used to seeing.

Mr. Wiesel. Mr. President, usually, in this room, people ask you questions. *[Laughter]*

The President. That's why I like this. *[Laughter]*

Mr. Wiesel. What you said is correct. The numbness is a danger. I remember during the Vietnam war, the first time we saw on television, live, the war in Vietnam—usually, of course, the networks broadcasted during dinner. So we stopped eating. How can you eat when people kill each other and people die? After 2 weeks, people went on eating. They were numb. And it's a danger.

But nevertheless, I don't see the alternative. Except I hope that in the next millennium, the next century, those who are responsible for the TV programs, for the news programs, will find enough talent, enough

fervor, enough imagination, to present the news in such a way that the news will appeal to all of us day after day. I do not see an alternative. We must know what is happening.

And today we can know it instantly. If the American people now are behind you, it is because they see it on television and they see it in newspapers. They see the images. They see the pictures of children in the trains, as you said, in the trains. So how can they remain indifferent? And therefore, I am—the risks are there, but I have faith that we shall overcome the risks. But we must know.

[At this point, Ms. Lovell, Director, White House Millennium Council, and the First Lady led the question-and-answer portion of the evening. Ms. Lovell called on a Native American leader in attendance who briefly described atrocities in her peoples' history and asked Mr. Wiesel what a nation can do to overcome indifference to suffering without resorting to military action to awaken awareness. The First Lady cited Bernard Bailyn's remarks from the first millennium evening noting people too often overlook or ignore segments of history that are discomforting.]

The President. I'd just like to say one thing specifically, Chief. First of all I'm glad you're here, and I'm glad you're here for this. I think that Hillary and I have spent more time on Native American issues and with Native American leaders, than any previous administration, at least that I know anything about. And with all respect, one of the things that I think is killing us in this country—still is a big problem—is a phenomenal amount of ignorance on the part not just of schoolchildren but of people in very important positions of decisionmaking, about the real, factual history of the Native Americans in the United States.

And you can almost find no one who understands the difference in any one tribe or another. And you can almost find no one who understands that, yes, a few tribes are wealthy because of gaming, because of the sovereignty relationship, but also the poorest Americans are still in Native American communities. And I think this disempowerment, this stripping of autonomy and self-respect

and self-reliance, and the ability to do things that started over a century ago, still, in subtle ways, continues today.

And from my perspective, I've been terribly impressed with a lot of the elected leaders of the tribes all across the country. And I think that we really have a huge job to do to not have kind of a benign neglect or not benign, a malign neglect, under the guise of preserving this sovereignty relationship. And we need to recognize what we did and what is still there that's a legacy of the past, so that we can give the children of the Native American tribes all over this country the future they deserve.

I think it's a huge issue, and I still think ignorance is bearing down on us something fierce. And I thank you for being here.

[The question-and-answer portion of the evening continued. A Rwandan participant asked how individuals around the world who, by their indifference in 1994 allowed genocide to occur, could show that they were not still indifferent to the fate of Rwanda. Mr. Wiesel briefly responded.]

The President. I think we could have prevented a significant amount of it. You know, it takes—the thing about the Rwanda massacre that was so stunning is it was done mostly with very primitive weapons, not modern mass killing instruments, and yet it happened in a matter of just a few weeks, as you know.

And I want to give time for others to ask their questions, but let me say I have thought about this a great deal, more than you might imagine. And we went to Kigali when we were in Africa, and we talked to a number of the survivors, including a woman who woke up to find her husband and six children all hatcheted to death, hacked to death. And she, by a miracle, lived and was devoting herself to the work of helping people like you put your lives back together.

One of the things that made it, I think, more likely that we would act in Kosovo and, eventually, in Bosnia, is that we had a mechanism through which we could act, where people could join together in a hurry, like with NATO. And one of the things that we are trying to do is to work with other African countries now on something called the Africa

Crisis Response Initiative, where we send American soldiers to work with African countries to develop the ability to work with other militaries to try to head these kinds of things off and to do it in a hurry.

I can only tell you that I will do my best to make sure that nothing like this happens again in Africa. I do not think the United States can take the position that we only care about these sorts of things if they happen in Europe. I don't feel that way. And I think that we will, next time, be far more likely to have the means to act in Africa than we had last time in a quicker way.

[The next question, which came from the Internet, was: Who determines exactly what human rights are; is there a list; are human rights different in various locales? The First Lady pointed out that there is a Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations, and Mr. Wiesel briefly responded.]

The President. Let me just say—there was another part to that question. The young man asked a very good question. The only thing I would say is you should get a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. You should read it. You will find that it also says, in addition to what Mr. Wiesel says, that all people should have certain rights against government. They should have the right to speak their mind. They should have the right to dissent. They should have the right to organize. They should have the right to chart their own course.

And then the last question you ask is a very important one. He said, "Is human rights, are they different from country to country?" And the truth is that to some extent they are, but that's not because people can use their own cultures or religion as an excuse to repress women and young girls, for example, the way the Taliban does in Afghanistan. It's because countries should be free to go beyond the baseline definition if they choose.

For example, we have an Americans with Disabilities Act, which we believe is sort of a further manifestation of the basic human rights. So we don't want—when you say, are they the same in all countries?—no, countries normally, when they have more wealth

or a more advanced democracy, find new ways to manifest those rights. And to that extent, they can be different from country to country.

Countries do have different religious and cultural institutions, but the whole purpose of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was so that no country could get away with oppressing the basic humanity of any person on the grounds that they were somehow different from some other country. That's the most important point to be made. That's why there needed to be a Universal Declaration.

[The question-and-answer portion of the evening continued. A participant pointed out that Islam, Christianity, and Judaism all preach love, kindness, and compassion, but that each had been used as a tool of oppression and suffering. Mr. Wiesel responded briefly that this was due to fanaticism and that part of the solution had to be education.]

The President. I would like to just offer a couple of observations, if I might.

First of all, I think one of the most hopeful signs I have seen to deal with this whole issue of religious fanaticism in the last few years is the enormous support of Jews in America and throughout the world for the Muslim populations of Bosnia and Kosovo. I think it doesn't answer all the questions of what should be the details of the resolution between the Israelis and the Palestinians. It doesn't solve all the problems, but everybody should see that this is a good thing. I think that the American Jewish community was maybe the most ardent community, earliest, for the United States stepping forward in Kosovo. And I think we have to see that as a good thing.

Secondly, I think this whole question of the treatment of women and children by the Taliban has aroused a vocal opposition among members of the Muslim community around the world who feel that they can say this and not be betraying their faith. I think this is a good thing.

Now, I would just like to make two other points, one of which is to agree with Elie on this one point. I agree on education, but education for what? There are a lot of

geniuses that are tyrants. What is it that we're going to educate?

I believe that every good Jew, every good Christian, and every good Muslim, if you believe that love is the central value of the religion, you have to ask yourself, why is that? The reason is, we are not God; we might be wrong. Every one of us—I might be wrong about what I've been advocating here tonight. It's only when you recognize the possibility that you might be wrong or, to use the language of Saint Paul, that we see through the glass darkly, that we know only in part, that you can give the other person some elbow room.

And somehow, one or two central scriptural tenets from Judaism, from Islam, from the Koran, and from Christianity, need to be put in one little place and need to be propagated throughout the world—to preach a little humility, if you please. Otherwise, we'll never get there.

The second point I wanted to make is this: A lot of these people that are saying this in the name of religion, they're kidding. They know perfectly well that religion has nothing to do with it. It's about power and control, and they're manipulating other people. And when it is, if it's someone who practices our faith, we've got to have the guts to stand up and say that. And it's hard, but we have to.

[The First Lady stated her belief that it was essential to speak out when you believe your religion has been misappropriated or misused and that the new century offered an opportunity for Jews, Christians, and Muslims to work together against fanaticism.]

The President. I would like to make one more point which I think is very important in the dealings between the West and the Islamic countries, generally, and I will use Iran as an example.

It may be that the Iranian people have been taught to hate or distrust the United States or the West on the grounds that we are infidels and outside the faith. And therefore, it is easy for us to be angry and to respond in kind. I think it is important to recognize, however, that Iran, because of its enormous geopolitical importance over time, has been the subject of quite a lot of abuse from

various Western nations. And I think sometimes it's quite important to tell people, "Look, you have a right to be angry at something my country or my culture or others that are generally allied with us today did to you 50 or 60 or 100 or 150 years ago. But that is different from saying that I am outside the faith, and you are God's chosen."

So sometimes people will listen to you if you tell them, "You're right, but your underlying reason is wrong." So we have to find some way to get dialog, and going into total denial when you're in a conversation with somebody who's been your adversary, in a country like Iran that is often worried about its independence and its integrity, is not exactly the way to begin.

So I think while we speak out against religious intolerance, we have to listen for possible ways we can give people the legitimacy of some of their fears or some of their angers or some of their historic grievances, and then say they rest on other grounds; now, can we build a common future? I think that's very important. Sometimes I think we in the United States, and Western culture generally, we hate to do that. But we're going to have to if we want to have an ultimate accommodation.

[The question-and-answer portion of the evening continued. An African-American participant who emigrated from the Caribbean suggested that, in the next few years, the Nation's minorities will become the majority and asked if and how we could actually become a global society.]

The President. I would just make two points, I think. First of all, I think given the fact that we're living in an age of globalization, where, whether we like it or not, more and more of our economic and cultural and other contacts will cross national lines, it is, in fact, a very good thing that sometime in the next century there will be no single majority racial group.

But I should also tell you that before we had large numbers of African-Americans coming, who were not here or direct descendants from slaves but others coming, like you did, from the Caribbean, and before we had large numbers of Hispanics, 100 years ago, Irish immigrants to this country were

treated as if they were of a different racial group. So we've always had these tensions.

But I think if we can learn to live together across our racial and religious lines, in a way that not just respects but actually celebrates our diversity, that does it within the framework, as I said, of a common fabric of shared values and shared opportunity, I think that will be quite a good thing for the 21st century. I think it will make America stronger, not weaker. So I look forward to that.

The second thing I want to say is I think that to get there we're going to have to more broadly find a way to have more economic and educational balance in the share of wealth, in the share of knowledge, across all of our racial and ethnic groups. There is no easy way to achieve that. But I am convinced that—and I see your colleague, Mr. Silber, out here, who's thought about this a great deal in his life—I'm convinced that lowering standards for people who come from poor backgrounds is not the answer.

I think we should raise standards and invest more resources in helping people achieve them. And then I think we need to provide the incentives in every neighborhood, in every Native American reservation, in every rural area, that have made the economy work elsewhere. It will never be perfectly done, but we can do a much, much better job of it. And unless we do a much better job educationally and economically, then we won't have all the benefits from our racial diversity that we could otherwise enjoy.

[The question-and-answer portion of the evening continued. Ms. Lovell then thanked the participants and asked for the President's closing remarks.]

The President. I don't think there's much more to say, except to thank you again for once again giving us your witness and for the powerful example of your life. We thank your family for joining us. And I thank all of you for caring about this.

I believe there's grounds for hope. I think the history of this country is evidence. I think the civil rights movement is evidence. I think the life and triumph of Nelson Mandela is evidence. I think evidence abounds.

What we all have to remember is somehow how to strike the proper balance of passion

and humility. I think our guest tonight has done it magnificently, and I thank him.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The White House Millennium Evening began at 7:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Chief Joyce Dugan of the Eastern Band Cherokee Nation, North Carolina; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); John Silber, chancellor, Boston University; and President Nelson Mandela of South Africa. The discussion was entitled, "The Perils of Indifference: Lessons Learned From a Violent Century." The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, Elie Wiesel, and the question-and-answer portion of the evening. The discussion was cybercast on the Internet.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

April 13, 1999

Situation in the Balkans

The President. Good afternoon. I have just had a long and very good meeting with a large number of Members of Congress to discuss America's effort, along with our NATO allies, to stand against ethnic cleansing, save lives, and bring peace in Kosovo. I'm grateful for the support we have received from Members of Congress from both parties and also very grateful for the questions, the comments, the advice that came out of this and previous meetings.

Our objectives here are clear, but I want to restate them. We want the Serb forces out of Kosovo. We want the refugees to be able to go home, protected by an international security force, as they work toward self-government.

This is Holocaust Remembrance Day. On this day, let us resolve not to let this ethnic cleansing and killing by Mr. Milosevic go unanswered.

You know, yesterday I had the privilege of meeting at Barksdale Air Force Base with aircrews participating in the allied campaign. They and all our forces are performing with extraordinary courage and skill. They are very well prepared, and their morale is high. They know they and our allies are fighting to end

human suffering, and for a Europe that is united, democratic, and at peace.

Our campaign is diminishing and grinding down Mr. Milosevic's military capabilities. We have weakened Serbia's air defenses and command and control. We have reduced his ability to move, sustain, and supply the war machine in Kosovo. We have damaged his refineries and diminished his capacity to produce ammunition. We are striking now at his tanks, and at his artillery, and have destroyed half his advanced Mig-29 aircraft.

Now we are taking our allied air campaign to the next level, with more aircraft in the region, with a British carrier joining our U.S.S. *Roosevelt* and a French carrier in the area. Our humanitarian effort is also increasing to meet the daunting challenge of providing food and shelter for the hundreds of thousands of refugees.

All of us would like the conflict to end, especially for the suffering people of Kosovo. We would also like to end the trials for the people of Serbia, who have been forced into confrontation by a cynical leader who has no regard for their welfare and who, I am absolutely convinced, has not even told them the truth about what he has done to the people of Kosovo.

We and our allies did everything possible to end this crisis peacefully, but now we are at arms. We and our allies are united on this point: We must stay the course and persist until we prevail.

Again I say, Mr. Milosevic can end this crisis right now by withdrawing his forces, permitting deployment of an international security force, and allowing the unconditional return of all displaced persons.

As I told the Members of Congress today I will shortly submit to them an emergency supplemental budget request to fund our military operations and munitions needs while maintaining our military readiness, to provide urgently needed assistance to the frontline states, nations bordering Kosovo, that are struggling to preserve their own stability as they cope with refugees and turmoil in the region, and of course, to fund our portion of caring for the hundreds of thousands of refugees.

These expenses are an immediate and urgent emergency. They are necessary so that

we and our NATO allies can continue to pursue this mission. I look forward to working with Members of both parties in both Houses to pass this appropriation soon and to continuing our mission to free the people of Kosovo of the oppression to which they have been subject and meet the conditions which I have outlined.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, the lawmakers said that you haven't taken ground troops off the table.

Kosovar Refugees

Q. Mr. President, can you reach the refugees in Kosovo, Mr. President—inside Kosovo—can you reach those refugees, and does it have to be done by land?

The President. Let me answer that. Well, the real answer to that question is that it is a very hard one, and we are working on it. We are quite concerned about the hundreds of thousands of refugees in Kosovo. The ones that are out of Kosovo, there is a big problem in providing food and housing and medical care, dealing with the ones that are just dehydrated. But at least we are now organized, and we're moving on that.

There is a much bigger problem with the people within Kosovo, and there are any number of problems with providing aid from the air. First of all, there is the possibility that if we airdrop supplies, they won't actually get to the refugees, that the Serbian forces will take them up. Secondly, there is the problem of risk to our aircraft of going into Kosovo airspace to try to airdrop the supplies. So we are looking at both of those problems and what can be done about them and what other options we have. It is a huge problem.

For the last couple of days, we've been working very hard on it. As soon as we have more to say on it, I'll be glad to make the appropriate announcements, and our people will be at work on it. It is a very large problem. We're aware of it. We know what the obstacles are and we're doing our best to overcome them.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of

the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Joint United States-China Statement April 13, 1999

President Clinton and Premier Zhu spoke this afternoon on the telephone. During the conversation, they agreed that both sides should move intensively on negotiations toward resolution of the remaining issues in their talks on China's accession to the WTO. They have agreed to have negotiations continue by the end of the month in Beijing.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Executive Order 13119— Designation of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia/Montenegro), Albania, the Airspace Above, and Adjacent Waters as a Combat Zone April 13, 1999

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, including section 112 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 112), I designate, for the purposes of that section, the following locations, including the airspace above such locations, as an area in which Armed Forces of the United States are and have been engaged in combat:

- The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia/Montenegro);
- Albania;
- the Adriatic Sea;
- the Ionian Sea north of the 39th parallel.

For the purposes of this order, I designate March 24, 1999, as the date of the commencement of combatant activities in such zone.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
April 13, 1999.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 15, 1999]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on April 16.

Remarks on the Universal Savings Accounts Initiative

April 14, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Andrew and Theresa and I were walking down here, and they were mildly nervous because they don't do this every day. But I think you did a very fine job. I want to thank them and their three sons for coming. I'd also like to thank Felicia Harris and her daughter, Alexis, who came because they're another representative family who will be benefited by the USA account proposal.

I thank Senator Barbara Boxer who is here and has had to stand up here alone because all of the House Members who were supposed to be with her are back at the House voting, and I appreciate her being here. I want to thank Secretary Rubin for his leadership on this issue, along with Deputy Secretary Larry Summers and Secretary Shalala and Gene Sperling, my national economic counselor.

You know that we want to talk to you about a major issue relating to retirement security in the 21st century. I think it's important to start out by saying that this will be a very big deal to a lot more people. We all know that the number of people over 65 will double by the year 2030. By the year 2050, the average American will live to be 82 years old.

Now, keep in mind that in 1900, life expectancy was only 47½ years. It took 4,000 years, the majority of all recorded history, to make a leap in longevity like the one we have seen in just one century. Now, as I get older, I remind everyone that this is a very high-class problem, and I like it better as the years go by. They are a precious gift.

President Roosevelt said, "There is no tragedy in growing old, but there is tragedy in growing old without means of support." Historically, our people have relied upon three basic means of support. First, Social Security: It became the basic means of support and still alone is responsible for lifting almost half of our senior population out of poverty. But it was never supposed to be seniors' only means of support. And we see by the fact that the poverty rate among elderly single women is twice that of seniors in general what happens when Social Security is

the only means of support. Pensions are the second, and private savings are the third. Retirement, to be truly secure, needs a mix of all three.

Well, how strong are these building blocks for most Americans? First, Social Security. It's a rock-solid guarantee, and it has been for generations. But for the 18 percent of the seniors, as I said, for whom Social Security is their only source of retirement income, life is still pretty tough.

The first thing we have to do is to make sure that Social Security will be there for the baby boomers. As I said in my State of the Union Address, that's why we ought to set aside 62 percent of the surplus to save Social Security and at the same time, as Secretary Rubin said, to pay down our national debt.

We also need to be very mindful that Medicare is quite important not only to Social Security recipients, who have that as their only source of income, but a lot of other seniors, as well. And we need to set aside enough money from the surplus to secure Medicare well into the next century.

Our budget plan pays down the debt and saves Social Security and Medicare. I look forward to working with Congress over the coming months to make some changes that are necessary to lengthen the life of both the Social Security and the Medicare Trust Funds, to maintain our fiscal discipline and secure the health of our economy into the 21st century.

Now, what about the second building block, private pensions? Half of all American workers, 73 million of them, have no employer-provided pensions whatever. IRA's and 401(k)'s are something they hear and read more and more about but don't have for themselves. Currently, only one-third—listen to this—only one-third of the tax benefits for pensions and retirement savings go to families who earn less than \$100,000, even though they represent the vast majority of working people in the United States today.

The third building block is personal savings. Americans living longer than ever and moving from job to job, who may have defined contribution rather than defined benefit pension plans, more and more will need to increase their personal savings. Our national savings rate has doubled over the last

6 years because we're saving more in the Government and not having deficits.

But personal savings has gone down over the last 6 years. Too few Americans are saving for their own retirement. For too many Americans, the hard work they do to provide for their families today, as you've just heard, makes it difficult for them to save for tomorrow. The typical family, headed by someone between the ages of 55 and 64, has financial assets worth just \$32,000. That won't support them very long in their retirement. For many Americans, as their lives stretch longer, their resources are stretched thinner.

I believe Americans who work hard their entire lives and raise their children should not have to have their retirement poised precariously on the edge of poverty. I believe that Americans, however, have to do more to save for their own future, but that Americans deserve the chance to do that.

Now, that's what this USA account proposal is all about. It is a complete and comprehensive new plan to help Americans with retirement savings for the 21st century. It is the right way to provide tax relief for the American people, and it is the right way to increase savings and strengthen our economy, even as we help families like the ones we honor today.

Now, I proposed in the State of the Union Address setting aside 12 percent of the surplus to establish these accounts. Let me say specifically what I think we ought to do. I propose that Americans be given the chance to open, voluntarily, Universal Savings Accounts. I propose that workers receive a refundable tax credit if their incomes are up to \$80,000 a year, deposited directly into their USA accounts, and as they save, that the Government help them save further, matching their contributions on a sliding scale, depending on income, giving extra help to those least able to save.

Further, I propose that aid be given to people with incomes between the incomes of \$80,000 and \$100,000 a year, but on a reduced basis. And even for people with incomes over \$100,000 a year, if they have no other personal retirement savings or pensions, they should also be eligible for this help.

This would give many, many millions of Americans a new opportunity to invest in the growing American economy, to have some wealth and security in retirement. It will revolutionize savings not simply for older Americans, but especially, perhaps, for younger Americans, from their very first days in the work force. With USA accounts, everyone in the USA will be able to save——

[At this point, several Members of Congress arrived.]

The President. ——especially if we get more and more congressional support as we go along. *[Laughter]*

Now, let me go through the reasons that I believe that this is the right way to provide tax relief with the surplus, and I would like to go through some very specific things.

First of all, Universal Savings Accounts do just what the name says, they make savings universal. It would be many workers' first, or certainly their best, opportunity ever to save. And by rewarding responsibility, USA accounts would help set them on the road to further savings.

Second, USA accounts make investment universal. Savings, of course, is about more than protecting what you have; it's about creating and building greater wealth for a better future. With these accounts, working families will have a chance to invest just as wealthier families do today. They can choose to invest in an interest-bearing account or a stock market mutual fund or a bond fund, just as they would with a Government or private pension.

Third, they make real retirement security universal, extending it even to workers with low and moderate incomes who are least likely to be offered pensions by their employers and least likely to be able to save on their own. As I said earlier—I want to emphasize this again—today, only a third of all the tax benefits provided under all the laws of Congress of existing retirement plans go to families earning less than \$100,000.

You heard what our distinguished speaker said. Listen to this. I mean, does this family—these look like the people you want to help, right? I mean, they're making America great. Only 7 percent of existing tax benefits for retirement go to families with incomes of \$50,000 a year or less—only 7 percent.

Our plan more than doubles that. More than 80 percent of the tax benefits of USA accounts will go to people making incomes of \$100,000 a year or less. It's the vast majority of the American people, and it's the right thing to do. It is the kind of tax cut America needs, targeted toward working families, toward savings, and toward the future.

USA accounts will add up. For example, if a couple earning \$40,000 saved just \$700 a year, matched by the Government, a USA account invested conservatively would be worth a quarter of a million dollars after 40 years. How many people making \$40,000 a year in this country today have a quarter of a million dollars in wealth? Think what this could do for America.

That means—let me just say what it means practically—it means that a person could retire and, just from this account, living over 80 years, have well over \$15,000 a year in income during retirement. That's the power of savings and compound interest.

But USA accounts involve more than compound interest. They also add up to a larger stake in our society and its future. Families who own very few financial assets would now own a share of our Nation's prosperity and in the remarkable economic growth they have done so much to create. People like Andrew and Theresa, people like Felicia Harris, people working hard, raising their children, thinking about their children's future, would have their first real chance to save for tomorrow while they are working today.

With USA accounts, we can say to a 25-year-old just starting a family, "You can start to save." With these accounts, we can say to someone who has made a transition from welfare to work and is watching the stock market surge in value, "You actually can have a stake in this wealth you are helping to create." We can say to working families, "Now you can think about your children's future and your own."

So, as I stand here at the end of one century and the dawn of the next, and I think about what I would like family life to be like 10, 20, 30, 40 years from now, one of the things that I want very badly to do is to see our wealth more fairly shared by those who create it and to see it shared in a way that makes sure that, as we live longer and longer,

those of us who retire will not pose unconscionable financial burdens for our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren.

Saving Social Security and Medicare is a part of that. Having the right sort of tax cut is a part of that. The USA accounts increase savings, increase retirement security, and will give millions and millions and millions of families who are a big part of this remarkable recovery we have enjoyed for the last 6 years—for the first time, those people will have a chance to actually own a piece of the American recovery they have done so much to create.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:09 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Andrew J. Goldschmidt, owner, Goldschmidt Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning, and his wife, Theresa.

Radio Remarks on Kick Butts Day

April 14, 1999

Today, on Kick Butts Day, young people all across America are speaking out against teen tobacco use. These kids are right. It's tragic—and it's wrong—that every day 3,000 kids become regular smokers. So I urge Congress to stand with our kids and stand up to the tobacco companies who are targeting our children. I urge you to make sure the tobacco settlement funds are used to reduce youth smoking. It's time all of us worked together to give our children the healthy future they deserve.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 12:30 p.m. on April 9 in the administrative offices of Memorial Hall in Philadelphia, PA, for later broadcast. This transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 14. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Actuality Line.

Statement on House Action on the Republican Budget Proposal

April 14, 1999

The budget passed by House Republicans falls short of what the American people need

for meeting the challenges of the 21st century. It fails to lock away the surplus to strengthen Social Security and Medicare, and it fails to meet many of America's other critical needs for the future. The fiscal discipline of the past 6 years has given us a historic opportunity to meet our Nation's most serious long-term challenges. I will continue to work with the Congress to use the surplus to pay down our national debt, to strengthen Social Security and Medicare, to encourage our people to save for the future, and to meet our defense, education, and other long-term needs.

Proclamation 7183—Jewish Heritage Week, 1999

April 14, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Nearly 350 years have passed since the first Jewish settlers arrived in America. The sons and daughters of a proud and ancient heritage, they brought to this new land gifts that have enriched our national life tremendously: a deep faith in God, a strong sense of morality, a devotion to family and community, a thirst for freedom, a reverence for justice, and a long tradition of philanthropy.

Millions of Jews have shared the American immigrant experience. Many came here fleeing poverty and persecution, yearning for religious or political freedom, seeking a better life for themselves and their families. Investing their dreams, ambitions, labor, and love in our country, Jewish immigrants overcame great obstacles to rise as far as their talents and effort could take them. Today their descendants continue to make extraordinary contributions to the cultural, economic, religious, and intellectual life of our Nation. In education, the arts, politics, the law, science, entertainment, technology, philanthropy, industry, and every other field of endeavor, Jewish men and women have excelled in their pursuits and strengthened America with their character and accomplishments.

As we look forward to a new century and a new millennium, let us give thanks for all that the Jewish community in America has

done to keep our Nation free, strong, and prosperous. Let us celebrate the freedom of religion guaranteed by our founders in the Bill of Rights, which has done so much to attract men and women of conscience to this land. Let us recognize that our country's great diversity of races, religions, ethnicities, and cultures will prove to be among our greatest strengths in the global community of tomorrow. And let us reaffirm our sacred obligation to build a future based upon a spirit of tolerance, respect, and understanding.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 18 through April 25, 1999, as Jewish Heritage Week. I urge all Americans to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 16, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 19.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With the American Society of Newspaper Editors in San Francisco, California

April 15, 1999

The President. Thank you very much, Mr. Seaton, distinguished officers, and members of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the crisis in Kosovo, why we're there, what our objectives are, how this fits in with our larger vision of the future.

Since I'm here I can't help noting that one of the truly striking aspects of this moment is the stark contrast it illuminates between a free society with a free press, and a closed

society where the press is used to manipulate people by suppressing or distorting the truth.

In Belgrade today, independent journalists are being persecuted. This week, one brave editor was murdered in cold blood. Meanwhile, the Government-run press has constructed an alternative reality for the Serbian people in which the atrocities their soldiers are committing in Kosovo simply don't exist. Under those conditions, decent people can remain in denial, supporting policies that lead them to political and economic ruin.

Thank goodness our press and free press throughout the world have tried to get at and get out the truth, to ensure that words like refugees, displacement, ethnic cleansing don't become stale and lifeless but remain causes for action.

The tragedy in Kosovo is the result of a meticulously planned and long-premeditated attack on an entire people simply on the basis of their ethnicity and religion, an attack grounded in a philosophy that teaches people to dearly love a piece of land while utterly dismissing the humanity of those who occupy it.

That is what Mr. Milosevic has been doing ever since Yugoslavia started breaking up in 1989. For a decade, he has been trying to build a greater Serbia, by using military force to rearrange the ethnic character of the nations which emerged from Yugoslavia. That is what he did for years in Croatia and, horribly, in Bosnia—what he is doing in Kosovo now.

Last year he drove hundreds of thousands of people from their homes into the frigid mountains and let them back only after NATO threatened to use force. He is now determined to crush all resistance to his rule even if it means turning Kosovo into a lifeless wasteland.

As these difficult days proceed, it is important to remember that we have no quarrel with the Serbian people. They were our allies in World War II; they have often been our allies. In a sense, they are victims of this tragedy, too. And we must understand the anguish of Serbian-Americans who, like Albanian-Americans, are worried about their loved ones back home. Americans should not blame Serbs or look down on Serbian-Americans because we disagree with the Milosevic

government. We must not let his ethnic cleansing provoke us to ethnic bias.

We and our 18 NATO allies are in Kosovo today because we want to stop the slaughter and the ethnic cleansing; because we want to build a stable, united, prosperous Europe that includes the Balkans and its neighbors; and because we don't want the 21st century to be dominated by the dark marriage of modern weapons and ancient ethnic, racial, and religious hatred. We cannot simply watch as hundreds of thousands of people are brutalized, murdered, raped, forced from their homes, their family histories erased, all in the name of ethnic pride and purity.

NATO was pivotal to ending the killing and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. We can do so again, and this time we have responded more quickly. Were we to stand aside, the atrocities in Kosovo would go on and on. Neighboring democracies, as you see, would be overwhelmed by permanent refugees and demoralized by the failure of democracy's alliance.

The Kosovar Albanians would become a people without a homeland, a burden to host countries, a magnet for radical ideologies, a breeding ground for unending warfare in the Balkans. NATO would be discredited, yes, because it made promises not kept but, more important, because its values and vision of Europe would be profoundly damaged. Ultimately, the conflict in Kosovo would spread anyway, and we would have to act anyway.

Now, when we decided to launch the air campaign, after Mr. Milosevic rejected peace, we believed there was at least a possibility that our readiness to act would deter him from moving forward as it had in the past. But we also understood clearly that with 40,000 troops and over 250 tanks massed in and around Kosovo he might intensify his repression and go on with his planned attack, as I made clear in my address to the Nation the night the airstrikes began.

There was only one possibility that we and our NATO allies were not willing to entertain, that the international community would look the other way in the face of this brutality. Now the NATO air campaign has been underway for 3 weeks, often interrupted or limited by bad weather. This is, however, a

good time to assess what has been accomplished and where we're going.

Mr. Milosevic's strategy has been to complete the ethnic cleansing, then break the unity of NATO by taking the bombs and offering phony concessions. But NATO is more united today than when the operation began. Whether they are Conservatives in Spain, Socialists in France, New Labor in Britain, or Greens in Germany, the leaders of Europe and the people they represent are determined to maintain and intensify our attacks until Mr. Milosevic's forces leave Kosovo and the refugees return under the protection of an international force or until his military is weakened to the point when he can no longer keep his vice-like grip on Kosovo.

At the beginning of the operation, we focused, properly, on Serbia's highly developed air defenses, to reduce the risks to our pilots. There are still significant air defenses up, and therefore, there is still risk with every mission. But we have degraded the system to the point that now NATO can fly 24 hours a day, not simply at night. We've struck at Serbia's machinery of repression, at the infrastructure that supports it. We've destroyed all of Serbia's refineries, half of its capacity to produce ammunition. We've attacked its bridges and rail lines and communications networks to diminish its ability to supply, reinforce, and control its forces in Kosovo. Increasingly now, we are striking the forces themselves, hitting tanks, artillery, armored personnel carriers, radar missiles, and aircraft.

As the allies have said, all of us, repeatedly, Mr. Milosevic can stop NATO's bombing by meeting these conditions: One, Serbian security forces must leave Kosovo; two, the displaced Kosovars must be able to return; three, there must be an international security force to protect all Kosovars, including the Serb minority there, as they work towards self-government.

If he refuses, our military campaign will continue to destroy as much of his military capability as we can so that each day his capacity for repression will diminish.

Meanwhile, his actions, though absolutely devastating to the civilian population, and horribly burdensome to the frontline states of Macedonia and Albania, have not de-

stroyed the armed opposition among Kosovars. Indeed, their numbers and determination are growing. Ultimately, Mr. Milosevic will have to choose, either to cut his mounting losses or lose his ability to maintain his grip on Kosovo.

As for NATO, we are prepared to continue this effort as long as necessary to achieve our objectives. Our timetable will be determined by our goals, not the other way around.

In the meantime, we must do more to aid the refugees. They are pouring out of Kosovo. We must help to preserve their lives and health and their hope of return. This week, NATO approved Operation Allied Harbor, under which 8,000 troops will work with relief agencies in Albania to establish camps, provide logistical support, deliver aid, and ensure security. Thus far, we have contributed in the United States \$150 million to this effort.

Conditions at the borders are beginning to improve. Now we are most concerned about the fate of the refugees, hundreds of thousands of them, trapped inside Kosovo. They are unable to leave but afraid to go home. Mr. Milosevic apparently wants to use them as hostages and human shields, and he's preventing relief groups from getting to them. People of good will all around the world today are trying to find ways to overcome this cruel and cynical manipulation of innocent human beings.

Mr. Milosevic also continues to hold on to the three American servicemen his forces seized in Macedonia. He continues to flout his obligation to allow the Red Cross to visit them. I want to say again as clearly as I can: The United States will hold him personally responsible for their welfare.

Now, the stand we have taken, first in Bosnia, now in Kosovo, against organized ethnic hatred is a moral imperative. But it is also a strategic imperative. And I'd like to talk with you a little about that and ask all of you to ask yourselves how you view the history of the last 50 years and how you imagine the next 50 years unfolding.

The history of the United States, for a very long time, was dominated by a principle of nonintervention in the affairs of other countries, even when we strongly disagreed. Indeed, for most of our history, we have worn

the principle of nonintervention as a badge of honor, beginning with George Washington's warning against entangling alliances.

The 20th century changed all that, with two World Wars, the cold war, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Panama, Lebanon, Grenada, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and others. Our steadily increasing involvement with the rest of the world, not for territorial gain but for peace and freedom and security, is a fact of recent history.

During the cold war, it can be argued that on occasion we made a wrong judgment, because we tended to see the world solely through the lenses of communism or anti-communism. But no one suggests that we ever sought territorial advantage. No one doubts that when America did get involved, we were doing what at least we thought was right for humanity.

Now, at the end of the 20th century, we face a great battle between the forces of integration and the forces of disintegration, the forces of globalism versus tribalism, of oppression against empowerment. And the phenomenal explosion of technology, including that of advanced weaponry, might be the servant of either side or both.

The central irony of our time, it seems to me, is this: Most of us have a vision of the 21st century world with the triumph of peace and prosperity and personal freedom; with respect for the integrity of ethnic, racial, and religious minorities; within a framework of shared values, shared power, and shared plenty; making common cause against disease and environmental degradation, against terror, organized crime, and weapons of mass destruction.

This grand vision, ironically, is threatened by the oldest demon of human society, our vulnerability to hatred of the other, those who are not like us. In the face of that, we cannot be indifferent at home or abroad. That is why we are in Kosovo.

Kosovo is a very small place on a very large fault line, on the borderlands of Central and Eastern Europe, at the meeting place of the Islamic world and the Western and Orthodox branches of Christianity, where people have settled in a complex patchwork of ethnic and religious groups and where countless wars have been fought over faith, land, and power.

Kosovo is far from unique in its region. It is surrounded by nations with similar challenges of history and diversity. The only difference today is that they—think of them, Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Bosnia—are now at least struggling to realize the vision of multiethnic democracy that Mr. Milosevic is struggling to kill.

Much of the former Soviet Union faces a similar challenge, including Ukraine and Moldova, southern Russia, the Caucasus nations of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, the new nations of central Asia. These nations spent most of the last half-century under Communist rule. In the years when Western Europe was overcoming its old animosities, by integrating its economies and embracing democracy, in the years when Americans began confronting our own legacy of racial hatred through open debate and political activism, these nations saw their problems frozen in time, kept in place by a rigid system that allowed no talk of change.

They projected to the world a picture of stability, but it was a false picture, a stability imposed by rulers whose answer to ethnic tensions was not to resolve them but to suppress and deny them. When the weight of Communist repression was lifted, these tensions naturally rose to the surface, to be resolved by statesmen, or exploited by demagogues.

The potential for ethnic conflict became, perhaps, the greatest threat to what is among our most critical interests: the transition of the former Communist countries toward stability, prosperity, and freedom. We are in Kosovo because we care about saving lives and we care about the character of the multiethnic post-cold-war world.

We don't want young democracies that have made the right choices to be overwhelmed by the flight of refugees and the victories of ethnic hatred. We don't want to see Europe re-fight with tanks and artillery the same battles they fought centuries ago with axes and arrows. And because stability in Europe is important to our own security, we want to build a Europe that is peaceful, undivided, and free, a Europe where young Americans do not have to fight and die again to deal with the consequences of other people's madness and greed.

Who is going to define the future of this part of the world? Who will provide the model for how the people who have emerged from communism resolve their own legitimate problems? Will it be Mr. Milosevic, with his propaganda machine and his paramilitary thugs, who tell people to leave their country, their history, and their land behind, or die? Or will it be a nation like Romania, which is building democracy and respecting the rights of its ethnic minorities, or Hungary, which has accepted that ethnic Hungarians can live beyond its borders with security and freedom, or Macedonia, which is struggling to maintain a tolerant, multiethnic society under the unimaginable pressures of the human and economic costs imposed by Mr. Milosevic's policies?

Now, after our recent experience in Bosnia and Kosovo, it's easy to forget that despite all the violence and turmoil they have experienced, the people of this region have, in fact, found ways to live together through the years. If the nations of the Balkans had truly experienced a thousand years of unceasing ethnic cleansing, their ethnic makeup wouldn't be anything like what it is. They would be utterly homogeneous, not so diverse. Today, most of those countries are democracies. Most are trying to resolve their problems by force of argument, not force of arms.

We cannot allow the Milosevic vision, rooted as it is in hatred and violence and cynicism, to prevail. But if we truly want a more tolerant, inclusive future for the Balkans and all of southeast Europe, we will have to both oppose his efforts and offer a better vision of the future, one that we are willing to help build.

Now, what does all this mean for the future of Kosovo and the region as a whole, starting from where we are right now? What many Kosovars want is independence. That is certainly understandable. After what they've been through, it's only natural that they should equate sovereignty with survival. But I continue to think it is not the best answer. Kosovo lacks the resources and infrastructure to be viable on its own. Moreover, Yugoslavia's long-suffering neighbors fear that an independent Kosovo would be unsta-

ble and that the instability itself would be contagious.

Finally, we must remember the principle we and our allies have been fighting for in the Balkans is the principle of multiethnic, tolerant, inclusive democracy. We have been fighting against the idea that statehood must be based entirely on ethnicity.

Some people think the best way to solve Kosovo's problems, and Serbia's and Bosnia's, is to withdraw their borders and rearrange their people to reflect their ethnic distinctions. Well, first of all, a lot of people who say that haven't looked very closely at the maps. It is a problem of staggering complexity. Once it starts, it would never end. For every grievance resolved, a new one would be created. For every community moved to a new place, another community would, by definition, be displaced.

If we were to choose this course, we would see the continuous fissioning of smaller and smaller ethnically based, inviable states, creating pressures for more war, more ethnic cleansing, more of the politics of repression and revenge. I believe the last thing we need in the Balkans is greater Balkanization.

The real question today is not whether Kosovo will be part of Serbia. The real question is whether Kosovo and Serbia and the other states in the region will be part of the new Europe. The best solution for Kosovo, for Serbia, for Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, and all the countries of southeast Europe is not the endless re-jiggering of the borders but greater integration into a Europe in which sovereignty matters but in which borders are becoming more and more open and less important in a negative sense.

It is to affirm the principle that Mr. Milosevic has done so very much to undermine, that successful modern states make a virtue, not a blood feud, out of ethnic and religious diversity. That is the solution that Western Europe accepted—not too long ago, really, when you think of it—after Europe had been consumed by two of the bloodiest wars in all of human history, after the Holocaust almost erased an entire people from the face of the Earth.

It is hard to visualize today, hard to remember, when you drive across Belgium and Holland, across the border between France

and Germany, that twice in this century millions of people spilled blood fighting over every inch of that land. It is hard to imagine the immediate postwar Europe Winston Churchill described as a rubble heap, a charnel house, a breeding ground of pestilence and hate. But because of the changes which have occurred, it is not unimaginable today that the nations of southeastern Europe will choose integration and peace, just as their Western neighbors have.

To achieve that future, we must follow the example of the World War II generation by standing up to aggression and hate and then by following through with a postconflict strategy for reconstruction and renewal. If we don't want people to remain mired in the miseries of yesterday, we must give them a better tomorrow to dream of and work for.

Even as we fight this conflict, we must look beyond it to what the Balkans, southeastern Europe, indeed, the whole continent of Europe should look like in 10 or 20 years. We should try to do for southeastern Europe what we helped to do for Western Europe after World War II, and for Central Europe after the cold war, to help its people build a region of multiethnic democracies, a community that upholds common standards of human rights, a community in which borders are open to people in trade, where nations cooperate to make war unthinkable.

That is why my request to Congress for supplemental funding for our military and humanitarian operation in Kosovo will also support emergency assistance to Yugoslavia's neighbors, which do not want their dreams of democracy and integration undermined by a flood of refugees and the fear of violence. That is why we've been working to help the countries of the region consolidate democratic reform and build professional armed forces under civilian control.

We need to intensify these efforts and to work with the European Union and the international financial institutions to mobilize more support for these countries. And we need to condition this help, just as we did with Western Europe 50 years ago, on closer cooperation among the beneficiaries and a new understanding of their sovereignty.

This will take constant, steady American engagement, together with our European al-

lies, old and new. It will demand keeping institutions, including NATO and the European Union, open to new nations who make the right choices. It will take money in the form of investment and aid. It will require a willingness to provide material and moral support to people and leaders across the region who are standing up for multiethnic democracy.

Realistically, it will require a democratic transition in Serbia, for the region's democracies will never be safe with a belligerent tyranny in their midsts. It will demand from us a recognition that there is no easy way out of the region's troubles, but there is a solution that advances our interests and keeps faith with our values if we are ready to make a long-term commitment.

Of course, all of this will take time and effort. In the meantime, the people of Kosovo should have protection, security, and self-government. That can only be assured by an international security force with NATO at the core.

As in Bosnia, this force should also include members of NATO's Partnership For Peace that represent the whole range of ethnic groups in Europe. This is precisely the kind of mission we envisioned for the Partnership For Peace when it was created 5 years ago, and the kind of mission I very much hope Russia could join as well, just as it did so constructively in Bosnia.

In the long run, our goal for Kosovo should not be independence but interdependence. Our watchword for the region should be integration, not disintegration. The ultimate answer for Kosovo, for Serbia, for Bosnia, Croatia, all the Balkans is not to withdraw behind barriers of mistrust and insecurity but to join a Europe where borders unite rather than divide, to build a richly textured fabric of civilization that lifts all God's children and resists those who would tear it apart by appealing to the dark recesses of the soul that lead only to dead ends.

The Balkan war that began in Kosovo 10 years ago must end in Kosovo. It should be the last conflict of the 20th century. It should not be the defining conflict of the 21st century.

The United States has the opportunity and the responsibility to make that decision come

out right for our children and our grandchildren. We can help to lead to a new day for the people of this long-suffering region, a more peaceful time for Europe, and a better future for the United States.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Edward Seaton. The President has kindly agreed to take questions. You must be an ASNE member to ask a question. I would invite you to go to the floor mikes, as I see you're doing. Please identify yourself and your newspaper.

April 14 Attack on Kosovar Albanians

Q. Mr. President, would you help us sort out what happened yesterday on the road from Przin to Kukes? According to press accounts—you had your choices, I guess—NATO aircraft either bombed a convoy that includes refugees or the Serbs attacked the Albanians in response to our bombing.

Did we screw up? Can the prosecution of this war be sustained—can it sustain the support of Americans if the newspapers of this country are publishing front-page stories showing dead civilians? And what word went out from you and Sandy Berger today, to the Pentagon and to the NATO High Command about yesterday's events?

The President. Well, first of all, what we believe happened is that the pilot thought it was a military convoy and that there were apparently civilians in the convoy who were killed. That is regrettable. It is also inevitable in a conflict of this kind, with planes traveling at high speeds, doing their best to fulfill their mission.

And if the requirement is that nothing like this can ever happen, then we're saying it's okay with us if Mr. Milosevic displaces over a million Kosovars, kills and rapes thousands upon thousands of them. And keep in mind, in Bosnia there were more than 2 million refugees and a quarter of a million people killed.

You cannot have this kind of conflict without some errors like this occurring. This is not a business of perfection. I ask you to think about the hundreds and hundreds of sorties which have been flown in the last 3 weeks and the small number of civilian casualties. It should be obvious to everybody in the world that we are bending over

backwards to hit military targets, to hit security targets, even to hit a lot of targets late at night where the losses in human life will be minimized. These efforts have been made, and they have been remarkably successful.

So, certain regrettable things will happen. We will do our best. The military will evaluate this incident, as it does every other one; so will the NATO command. But I have to tell you, if anyone thinks that this is a reason for changing our mission, then the United States will never be able to bring military power to bear again, because there is no such thing as flying airplanes this fast, dropping weapons this powerful, dealing with an enemy this pervasive who is willing to use people as human shields, and never have this sort of tragic thing happen. It cannot be done.

I believe when the scales are weighed, it will be obvious that this is a result of Mr. Milosevic's policies. If he doesn't want this to happen, he ought to get out of Kosovo, let the Kosovars come home, and let people come in there who can protect them. That is the answer to this.

Effectiveness of NATO Strategy

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much for coming to speak yourself. If the people, the hundreds of thousands of people hiding in the hills in Kosovo, the Albanian Kosovars, perish from natural causes or as a result of this slaughter of paramilitary forces, won't NATO's hoped-for victory from bombing be hollow? And won't we have failed to prevent the kind of repeat of the Holocaust that you've said is what we don't want to enter the 21st century with?

The President. Well, first of all, I believe that our strategy will prevail. We do have, as I said, a very difficult problem here, to figure out what to do about the refugees within Kosovo. We are working at it. The international relief agencies are working at it. A lot of countries that have some relationship with Serbia are working at it. And we are doing our best to try to figure out how to resolve it.

I think the answer is, what is the alternative? So far, we still don't have as many refugees and nowhere near as many people

dead as we did in Bosnia. And I think it's because we have moved more quickly. I think we have a chance to put this back together without having as much wreckage as we had there. And we are working as hard as we can to do it. It is a difficult situation, but we are working as hard as we can. And we are doing it while keeping this NATO alliance together.

And keep in mind, that is also very important, I think, that this is not an action by the United States alone. This is not one we engineered or dominated. This is a decision we made as partners with the 18 other NATO allies, and we are doing our best to deal with it. And I assure you that we're trying to deal with all the contingencies. I do not think it is—including trying to figure out what's the worst thing that can happen and how to avoid it. But we're doing our best to deal with that.

It's not possible to fly helpless cargo planes over and do air drops to people, for example, if we know there is a better than 50 percent chance they won't get the supplies in the first place and a much better than 50 percent chance that the planes would be shot out of the air, even though they are not war planes at all. So we're struggling to come to grips with this. But I think we moved very quickly, and we've made a lot of progress in a short time in dealing with the massive refugee problem on the borders in the other countries, and I hope in the next few days we'll have some progress to report on this.

President's Response to Criticism

Q. Mr. President, I haven't listened to any talk radio today, but, I apologize, I do often. And I'm often reminded of your wife's comment about the rightwing conspiracy, the critics who want to get at you for anything and undermine your Presidency and discredit you, personally. But there is a common drumbeat on the airwaves now, and it is that you, personally, lack the moral authority to be Commander in Chief.

And certainly, I guess there is a powerful inclination to ignore those criticisms. But if you had to address it to an Air Force pilot, who had listened to the same radio shows and perhaps been persuaded to that point of view, how would you address that?

The President. Well, I don't have to address it to the Air Force pilot. I am his Com-

mander in Chief, and they swore an oath to the Constitution, and they have performed admirably. And they don't deserve to hear that.

I just have seen a lot of our Air Force pilots. I just went down to Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, Louisiana. I spent endless amounts—I spent hours talking to the families, the friends, the people that were there, encouraging people to say what they think. One person said something critical. Several hundred said, "We believe in what we're doing. It is the right thing to do. Thank you for doing it. We are proud to do it. This is what we signed on for."

This is a democracy, and people can say whatever they want to say. But I have found that the American people, vast majorities of them, at least, appreciate it when I don't spend my time responding to them, and instead, I spend my time working for the American people and trying to do what I think is right. I let other people be their judge about whether they think I should or shouldn't do something. But I have no response, except to get up every day and try to do my job.

And I think that this country is in a better place than it was 6 years and 3 months ago, because we have followed that policy instead of being totally consumed with spending all of our time answering our critics. I'd rather work on what I can control, and the opinion of some of the talk show people is something that's way beyond my control and happily so. *[Laughter]*

Mr. Seaton. We have time for only one more question, and if I could, I'd like to break the line over here.

Q. I really have an important question, if I may.

Mr. Seaton. Okay, but if Len Downey would get his question right afterward.

Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Q. Mr. President, we're a center for chemical warfare, training, and storage in Anniston, Alabama, and Pentagon officials confirmed to use the chemical weapons capability of the former Yugoslav forces. How does that availability of weapons of mass destruction among the Serbs impact American

and NATO operations in the Kosovo conflict? And what is your administration's policy of response or retribution in the, however unlikely, event of enemy use of such weapons of mass destruction against insurgents or refugees or even the NATO alliance?

The President. My response would be swift and overwhelming. And we have, obviously, intelligence about the capabilities of the Serbs in a number of areas militarily, just as we do with our countries. But I think they are quite well aware of the dangers of overly escalating this. And I think that's all I should say about it right now.

Mr. Seaton. Mr. President, I'm told we have to—you can take one from Len.

Q. I'm the only woman in line, so I'd like—[laughter]—

The President. I'll take a couple more. You know what's going on, don't you? The people that help me don't trust you not to write a story that's about something other than Kosovo, and they think the longer I stay up here, the greater my chances of screwing up. [Laughter] That's really what's going on here. And it's wonderful when you're not running for anything, you can say just exactly what's on your mind. [Laughter]

But—have at it, go ahead. [Laughter]

Human Rights in Afghanistan

Q. Okay, great. Thank you. Knowing your interest in human rights and having had you referred to all God's children, I'd like you to focus some attention for just a moment on some of God's children in Afghanistan. And what I'm speaking about is, this is a country that's under the harsh rule of the Taliban, some of whose leaders we helped finance and arm in their fight against the Soviet Union.

In Afghanistan today, there are 11½ million women and children, women and girls, who are virtually under house arrest. Male doctors are not permitted to treat women and girls, and female doctors are not allowed to practice. Women are kept in their homes and may only leave if they're in the company of a brother, a father, or a husband. Windows of homes where women live are painted black so that no man may, per chance, see them without their burkha. When they go outside, they're totally shrouded. A 70-year-

old woman was beaten severely because her ankles showed to a man. A teenage girl was almost stoned to death because her ankles showed when she was riding her bicycle. Women in this country are not permitted to do anything except stay in their homes, unless they leave in the company of a man.

It's a terribly repressive regime. And a number of people think that we have some obligation to these 11½ million women and girls, because of our relationship—former relationship to these people who are in power. What do you think?

The President. Well, I absolutely do, and I think we would even if we hadn't supported the Taliban on "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" principle years ago. I think independent of that, we do. I think that what has happened to the women and children of Afghanistan is atrocious.

The First Lady and I had an event at the White House to highlight that on Human Rights Day, including having two Afghan women there who talked to the press about what was going on. I met with a group of leaders from the Feminist Majority the other day and talked about how we could do more to bring more to the United States, what other things we could do to put pressure on Taliban and on other states, other countries, to try to help us to change conditions.

And I think it is very, very important to do. I think it is one of the worst examples of systematic human rights abuses in the world today, and a terrible perversion of Islam.

Mr. Seaton. We asked Len Downey to raise a question that was of concern to ASNE, so I invite him to do so if he could.

Availability of Information

Q. Mr. President, a growing number of newspaper editors and broadcast news executives are very concerned about the relatively little reliable information and specific information that has been released so far by the Defense Department about the bombings and the other military activities so far during Operation Allied Force. Much less information, for instance, than was provided daily during the Persian Gulf war or Operation Desert Fox. In view of the need, Mr. President, that you discussed today to have

the American people support this military action, will you instruct the Defense Department to provide us and the American people with more specific information about the bombing?

The President. Well, Mr. Downey, you know, late last week the Defense Department had a big, long briefing, and there are basically two issues here, and we're trying to resolve them. I actually had a rather extended conversation yesterday with two of the other leaders of the NATO alliance about this because I think it's important, not just in the United States but throughout Europe, to get more information out more quickly.

There have been two problems from the point of view of the Pentagon: One is trying to work through the NATO command structure and let them do the daily briefings and try to determine by consensus, if you will, what should be gotten out and how; and then to have the Pentagon play a supporting role in that.

The other problem is a practical one, which is sometimes, it takes—in the Gulf, when we fought in Iraq, in Desert Storm, and later, when we had our actions there, neither the weather nor the terrain presented the barriers to actually assessing quickly what the impact of the action was that is presented in the Balkans. So sometimes there is just an inevitable delay, which is one of the reasons that—last week I talked to Secretary Cohen and General Shelton about having the Pentagon do a big briefing to be much more detailed about what, in fact, had happened and what conclusions we drew from it.

So all I can tell you is, I'm aware that this is a difficulty. I agree that we should try to do more, more simultaneous with the actions. And I am working on it and trying to get NATO to do more as well. Unless there is some specific security-related reason that some issue shouldn't be talked about, I think the more information we can get out there the more quickly, the better off we are.

Q. Thank you.

The President. But I know that whenever there's a conflict between any Government and the press, there's always the assumption that there is some deliberate scheme at work here. And I don't think that's the case here. I think really, we're trying to work through—

NATO has never done this kind of operation before, in this way, and there are a lot of things that have to be worked through. But I am working on it, and I hope that most of you will be generally satisfied within the next few days.

Mr. Seaton. Want to take a couple more?

The President. We could—he's been standing there a long time. [Laughter]

President's Legacy

Q. I'm the only resident from Vancouver, Washington, standing here, so—[laughter]—Mr. President, my question has two parts. The first is, as you near the end of your second term in office and deal with such issues as the Balkans, what legacy do you believe you are leaving to the American public? Secondly, would you be specific, sir, in telling us ways in which America is better off for your Presidency?

The President. Well, I think, first of all—let me answer the first question first. I think others will determine the legacy of this administration, and most of it will have to be done when all the records are there, and time passes and people without an axe to grind one way or the other have a chance to have their say.

I can only tell you what I have tried to do. I have tried to lead America into a new century and into a whole new era in the way we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world. And I have tried to help build a world that was more peaceful, more prosperous and more secure.

I think that among the things that people will say this administration did and made progress on was, we gave the United States a modern economic policy and got out of 12 years of horrible deficit spending during which we quadrupled the debt. I think that the work we did to support the solution of social problems in reducing the welfare rolls by half, and reducing the crime rate, and putting 100,000 police on the street would be important. I think the work we did in education will be important.

I think the systematic effort we made to promote reconciliation among people of different racial groups will be important. I think the work we have done in the Middle East to Northern Ireland in promoting peace will

be important. I think the work we've done in Latin America, through the Summit of the Americas and the work we've done with our allies in Central America will be important. I think there are a lot of things that will altogether add up to preparing America for the 21st century, building a stronger American community, and repairing the social fabric.

And let me just say one thing. When I got off the airplane today there were a bunch of young people who are AmeriCorps volunteers. That's a program we started back in the second year of my Presidency. And one young woman said to me, "I'm 30 years old. You're the first President I ever voted for. I've kept up. You did what you said you'd do, and it's worked." And her saying that to me meant more than just about anything any American could say.

When I was in New Hampshire for the seventh anniversary of the New Hampshire primary, there were schoolchildren along the highway waiting in the cold rain. And person after person said to me, "You had to come to these little town meetings in 1991 and we listened to you, and you've done what you said."

So what I think will also happen is people will see Americans can solve their problems; Government has a role to play, and it can produce. So I think there's a sense of possibility, a sense of optimism, a sense of eagerness about the future that the present difficulties in Kosovo cannot begin to overshadow. And I think the country is clearly better off than it was 6 years ago.

Q. Thank you.

Success of Post-Cold-War Policies

Q. Mr. President, and part of a little known function of this convention is to help train young journalists. There are some journalists here who produce the AS&E report. I'd like to ask them to stand because they gave me this question. If you all would stand, please.

Their question was, and you made an indirect reference to this in your speech—you didn't mention the Marshall plan by name, but that seemed to be what you were talking about as a way to resolve this later. And their question was, could a greater effort have been made after the fall of the Berlin Wall

to do more along the lines of a Marshall plan, particularly in the Balkans, and might that have prevented something like we're facing today?

The President. Perhaps. I wasn't President then, and I don't know. I don't say that in a blameworthy sense; I just wasn't. And I don't think it's fair for me to make judgments where I don't have all the facts, and I can't say. I don't mind saying that I missed the boat somewhere if I know it or if I know enough about somebody else to say that. but I don't know the answer to that.

Let me say it in another way. I am convinced that after communism fell, that the work that—we had a chance after the Berlin Wall fell, after the end of communism, to build a Europe that was united, democratic, and at peace for the first time in history. You go back, since the rise of nation states on the continent of Europe that had never been true before. There had always been some conflict, there had always been some division, there had always been some absence of democracy—never before possible.

At that moment there were three great challenges, I would argue, to that vision. One is, what happens to Russia? Does Russia become a democracy? Does it become stable? Can it be prosperous enough in the painful transition? The other was, what happens to all the states around that were Communist, non-Russian states, basically, the Balkans and Central Europe and southeastern Europe—second question. Third question is, would there be a conflict between Islam and the Orthodox branch of Christianity, manifest most obviously in the tension between Greece and Turkey but also up in the Balkans? If those three things could be resolved in a satisfactory way, then we could build a Europe that was united, democratic, and at peace.

Now, what happened? The Germans took on East Germany, in an act of patriotism and generosity and costliness of staggering proportions. They're still paying the economic price today, but it was a brave and good and generous thing to do.

The major countries in Europe supported the European Union. NATO took in Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. There was a massive effort made to try to deal with

Russia. The United States put a lot of money into the denuclearization program and other things.

After all is said and done, where are we? And we dealt with the Balkans in a more halting way. I think everyone would have to admit that. And we've continued without great success to resolve the difficulties between Greece and Turkey, but they haven't gotten worse, either. And we may have some Americans of both heritages here today that could have some ideas about that.

So where are we today? Today, we're concerned that Russia has maintained its democracy, but it's economy has been so burdened, it's caused all kinds of other problems, and that takes a lot of time for us. We're working on that. We're trying to maintain our strategic partnership with them even as we disagree about the conflict in the Balkans.

Central Europe is in very good shape, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. Romania, Bulgaria, a lot of other countries—Slovenia—are doing better than most people would have imagined they would do. But the Balkans are in trouble, and the trouble in the Balkans has exacerbated the tensions with Russia, at least in the short run.

And all I can tell you is, I don't know whether we could have done more before. I always prefer to look to tomorrow. I'm not blaming anybody for what happened before. I can't do that. I don't know enough to know. Everybody had their hands full, and there were so many changes going on at once, I'm not sure anyone could have figured out more to do.

But I can tell you that if you want to think about what you want your children to live like, you could imagine what do you want to happen in Asia, how are we going to work out our relationships with China and deal with the remaining security threat in North Korea and try to help Japan and the other countries come back; how are we going to have the strongest possible alliance in Latin America; what kind of new partnership can we have with Africa. But it all could come a cropper unless we have a united, democratic, and free Europe and the three things are what I said: Our relationship with Russia; what happens in the Balkans and south-eastern Europe; and will Islam and Christi-

anity be able to coexist in a positive way in the underbelly of Europe.

And so I would say, maybe more could have been done; I don't know. I just know now, right now, all those people are fighting over smaller and smaller pieces of land. It's like life is a zero-sum game. You kick me out of my village; I'll kick you out of your village.

The Bible says, wisely, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." We need to have an alternative vision. They need to be brought into the vision of a prosperous Europe. They need to have more to gain by working together than they do by having constant fights with one another. They need to have—and we need to reach out and lift up, there.

So, however, this conflict ends, or whenever it ends—I think I know how it's going to end—but whenever it ends, we have some building to do. They have to have something to live for. You just can't tell people what they can't do; they've got to have something to be for, something to dream of, a future to build. And we ought to be a part of it.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Fairmont Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Edward Seaton, president, American Society of Newspaper Editors; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and journalist Len Downey, the Washington Post.

Memorandum on Carbon Dioxide Emissions

April 15, 1999

*Memorandum for the Secretary of Energy,
Administrator of the Environmental
Protection Agency*

*Subject: Report on Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)
Emissions*

My Administration's proposal to promote retail competition in the electric power industry, if enacted, will help to deliver economic savings, cleaner air, and a significant down payment on greenhouse gas emissions reductions. The proposal exemplifies my Administration's commitment to pursue both

economic growth and environmental progress simultaneously.

As action to advance retail competition proceeds at both the State and Federal levels, the Administration and the Congress share an interest in tracking environmental indicators in this vital sector. We must have accurate and frequently updated data.

Under current law, electric power generators report various types of data relating to generation and air emissions to the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). To ensure that this data collection is coordinated and provides for timely consideration by both the Administration and the Congress, you are directed to take the following actions:

1. On an annual basis, you shall provide me with a report summarizing CO₂ emissions data collected during the previous year from all utility and non-utility electricity generators providing power to the grid, beginning with 1998 data. This information shall be provided to me no more than 6 months after the end of the previous year, and for 1998, within 6 months of the date of this directive.
2. The report, which may be submitted jointly, shall present CO₂ emissions information on both a national and regional basis, stratified by the type of fuel used for electricity generation, and shall indicate the percentage of electricity generated by each type of fuel or energy resource. The CO₂ emissions shall be reported both on the basis of total mass (tons) and output rate (e.g., pounds per megawatt-hour).
3. The report shall present the amount of CO₂ reduction and other available information from voluntary carbon-reducing and carbon-sequestration projects undertaken, both domestically and internationally, by the electric utility sector.
4. The report shall identify the main factors contributing to any change in CO₂ emissions or CO₂ emission rates relative to the previous year on a national, and if relevant, regional basis. In addition, the report shall identify

deviations from the actual CO₂ emissions, generation, and fuel mix of their most recent projections developed by the Department of Energy and the Energy Information Administration, pursuant to their existing authorities and missions.

5. In the event that Federal restructuring legislation has not been enacted prior to your submission of the report, the report shall also include any necessary updates to estimates of the environmental effects of my Administration's restructuring legislation.
6. Neither the DOE nor the EPA may collect new information from electricity generators or other parties in order to prepare the report.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

Statement on Congressional Action on Child Care Legislation

April 15, 1999

I am pleased that Congress has made important progress this week to address the pressing child care needs of America's working families.

Significant new investments are needed to make child care better, safer, and more affordable for working families. My budget request includes substantial new resources to help working families pay for child care, increase the supply of good after-school programs, improve the safety and quality of care, and promote early learning.

Today Senator Jeffords and Representative Gilman introduced, with bipartisan co-sponsors, the "Caring for America's Children Act," which calls for significant new investments to make child care more affordable and improve child care quality. Other important legislation has been introduced in the House and the Senate during this congressional session, as well. And most important, this week the Congress demonstrated through votes on the budget resolution that there is strong bipartisan support for taking

action on child care. I want to thank Senators Dodd and Jeffords for their strong leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working over the coming months with Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to strengthen child care for America's working families.

Proclamation 7184—National Park Week, 1999

April 15, 1999

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

America's national parks are truly America's national treasures. Within their borders lie much of what is most precious to us: the breathtaking beauty of mountains, rivers, forests, and valleys; the extraordinary richness and variety of plants and animals; the places and artifacts of the special people and events that have shaped both our history and our destiny.

This week we remember with gratitude one of those special people who played a pivotal role in the creation of our country's National Park System. Conservationist John Muir emigrated to the United States as a child 150 years ago this year. As a young man, he experienced for the first time the high country of California's Sierra Nevada and Yosemite, and for the rest of his life he championed America's wild places. "Everybody needs beauty as well as bread," he wrote, "places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike." He became the driving force behind the creation of such national parks as Yosemite, Sequoia, Mount Rainier, Petrified Forest, and Grand Canyon, and was an early advocate of an agency to manage them in a consistent manner. Although he died two years before the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916, many still regard John Muir as the "Father of our National Park System."

Visitors to our Nation's wondrous national treasures can still experience the scenic grandeur that so inspired John Muir. In Washington State's Mount Rainier National Park, glaciers radiate from the summit and slopes

of an ancient volcano, rising above dense green forests and brilliantly flowered meadows. This year, we celebrate the centennial anniversary of this cherished national park, preserved because of the vision and efforts of a coalition of mountaineers, geologists, and conservationists, including John Muir.

Today, the National Park System has grown to 378 sites visited by more than 285 million people each year. Each of these sites is interwoven with America's richly diverse natural and cultural heritage to make up the pattern of our past, the fabric of our present, and the promise of our future. The two newest additions to our park system reflect this grand tradition. Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site in Arkansas pays tribute to the courage and quiet dignity of nine young African Americans who crossed the color line and changed American society forever. Alabama's Tuskegee Army Air Corps National Historic Site celebrates the World War II exploits of the all-black Army Air Corps unit whose members prevailed over prejudice and discrimination in the U.S. Armed Forces to compile a distinguished combat record in defense of freedom.

At these and so many other parks and historic sites across the country, the dedicated men and women of the National Park Service preserve America's heritage and teach a new generation the importance of informed and careful stewardship of our Nation's treasured places. During National Park Week, let us give thanks for the wisdom of all those who established our national parks and for the hard work and generous spirit of all those who continue to preserve them for our benefit. Because of their efforts, Americans will always find in our national parks the beauty, inspiration, knowledge, and renewal of spirit that have blessed our national journey for so long.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 19 through April 25, 1999, as National Park Week.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the

United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 20, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 16, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 21.

**Remarks at a Majority 2000
Luncheon in Dearborn, Michigan
April 16, 1999**

Thank you so much. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your warm welcome. I want to thank all of those who have spoken and been introduced. This is, because of the operation going on in Kosovo—and I know that all Americans are proud of what our young people in uniform are doing there—it is an unusual moment for me to be here but a very important moment for Americans to reexamine what it means to be a good citizen on the edge of the new century.

There are a lot of things I'd like to say, but the first thing I want you to do is to hear me. I am here—you know, I won't be a candidate in 2000. I wish I could be, but I can't. [Laughter] And I'm here because I care about my country's future. I am profoundly grateful to the people of Michigan for having given Al Gore and me a chance to serve twice by their votes in the elections of 1992 and 1996, profoundly grateful to the Members of this delegation who have all been introduced—Mr. Dingell and Mr. Bonior and Debbie, thank you for running for the Senate.

You can't beat anybody with no one; people have to show up and run. And Debbie could stay in Congress and have a good time and enjoy this and be a part of a majority, and she's taken a significant personal risk because she has a significant personal commitment to the future of this State and this Nation. And I appreciate it. And I know you do. And I think she has more than a significant chance to be victorious because of that.

I was talking to the people at our table—it seemed like every time somebody from the Michigan delegation was introduced I had some new or different thing to say, but it

is an unusual House delegation, really unusually remarkable people, each with their own strengths. And I cannot say enough about Senator Carl Levin, who is off on our common mission of securing a just resolution to the problem in Kosovo.

I also want to thank Senator Riegle and Frank Kelley and my good friend Jim Blanchard, my former colleagues in different ways over the years. I've been at this so long, Frank Kelley and I served together in the 1970's. [Laughter] I want to congratulate your new attorney general. I know she's doing a wonderful job. And Mayor Stanley, I'm glad to see you. And I can't say enough about Dennis Archer, and I want to say that I admire the effort you are making to reform your schools. And I believe you will succeed. Let me tell you something: One thing I've learned in this business over a long period of time, having spent countless hours in our Nation's schools, all of our kids can learn, and all of our schools can succeed, but someone has to be in charge. Change has to be possible; expectations have to be high. There have to be clear standards, and then there has to be support. And I want the rest of you to support it.

I've heard a lot of people say today, "I'm so glad that we're making these changes in our school systems." If you want the kids to be held to higher standards then you have to support them. And if you have to raise the funds for more after-school programs or summer school programs or whatever it takes, you have to support them. So you have made a commitment now to change the way you're going to run your schools. Nothing is more important. I want you to support the mayor and make sure he has what he needs to get the job done for the children.

I want to thank the leaders of the Michigan House and Senate for being here. I have enjoyed my opportunities to be with the legislature and to speak to the legislature recently. And I want to thank Patrick Kennedy for going around the country and trying to make sure we can run a race.

Last time, in 1998, when the party of the President gained seats in the House of Representatives in a midterm election, in the 6th year of a Presidency, for the first time since 1822—1822—when we lost no seats in

the Senate, and it was projected that we would lose five or six. We were outspent by over \$100 million. And still these fine people, with a lot of your help, achieved that result. Thanks to the efforts of Dick Gephardt and Patrick Kennedy and a lot of other people, that won't happen this time. I don't believe, and I'm really grateful to them.

And finally, let me say I think you could see from what has been said by all these people about each other, we have a real commitment to each other personally and a commitment to our shared agenda, and I think that is a very good thing.

I admire Dick Gephardt and David Bonior enormously, not only because of the positions they take, not only because they stuck up for me when I was down as well as when I was up, but because they are truly good human beings. They're the kind of people you would be proud to live next door to, the kind of people you'd be proud to have raise your children if something terrible happened to you, the kind of people you would trust with your life's possessions if you had to turn your back and go away and do something else for an extended period of time. And they're the kind of people that ought to be directing the Congress into the 21st century.

And I want to say something to all of you today in the midst of what is a difficult period. I want to tell you how this business in Kosovo fits with all the other things that we'd rather be here talking about today, with Social Security or education of our children or all the rest of it, and why it is an appropriate thing for us to be here today to talk about our responsibilities as citizens, which includes making choices about candidates, supporting them, and showing up and being counted.

Now, in 1992 when I ran for President, I spent a great deal of time in Michigan, partly because one of my secrets was that an enormous number of people who live in Michigan came from Arkansas. *[Laughter]* It's one of the benefits of a depressed southern economy after World War II, is that I got elected President 40 years later because Michigan and Illinois were full of people from my home State.

But I knew that this State, with all of its diversity, with its traditional industrial econ-

omy, its emerging high-tech economy, its magnificent agricultural economy, its big cities and small towns, really carried the future of America in its life. And I came here, and I said to the people, "Look, here's the deal. Things aren't going very well, and if we keep doing the same thing over and over again, we're going to keep getting the same results. And I believe that we need to imagine what we want America to look like in the 21st century. I know what I want it to look like. I want a country where there is opportunity for every responsible citizen. I want a country where we're part of one community across all the lines that divide us. And I want us to build a world where there is more peace and freedom, more security, and more harmony. And we're going to have to change some things to do that. We're going to have to stop talking about how terrible the deficit is and do something about it. We're going to have to stop talking about how we wish our schools were better and invest not only money, but the right kind of policies. We're going to have to stop talking about how we wish people weren't trapped in a lifetime of welfare dependency and say that able-bodied people have to move off, but we're not going to punish their children, and we're going to give them the education and training and support they need," and on and on and on. I said, "you know, we're going to take a different policy."

And a lot of it was controversial. And frankly, one of the reasons I'm here today is that the Democrats might not be in the minority today if we hadn't had to go all alone to reduce the deficit while we increased our investment in education. But it led to the balanced budget; it led to lower interest rates, which was a huge, huge income increase to people who benefited from those lower interest rates; it's given us record high homeownership in America. Millions of people have refinanced their homes and saved a lot of money.

There have been more businesses, more jobs, and for the last 2 years, finally, for the first time in over two decades, incomes are rising for all economic groups in the country. We have the lowest African-American, the lowest Hispanic poverty ever recorded since

we have been keeping statistics and the lowest unemployment rate among African-Americans and Hispanics recorded since we have been keeping statistics, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years.

And this is important. This is important. Now, we also have the first balanced budget in a generation, 2 years of surpluses now, the lowest crime rate in 30 years. We've genuinely opened the doors of college to everybody with tax credits and better loans and work study programs and scholarships, the Pell grants. We've got 90 percent of our children immunized for the first time in our history against basic childhood illnesses. The air and the water are cleaner. We've increased—we've tripled the number of toxic waste dumps we've cleaned up.

All these things have flowed from a few very tough decisions. Welfare rolls cut nearly in half. Our country has been a force for peace and freedom from Northern Ireland to the Middle East. We have reached out in partnership to democracies all over the world. We are joining in an international fight against terrorism and the spread of chemical and biological weapons. We have tried to hope for the best and work for the best in the new century and prepare for any eventuality.

And this country is in a better place than it was 6 years ago. And because of our success, we have heavier responsibilities to ourselves and to others. But none of that would have happened—none of it—if it hadn't been for the people in this room that I came here to support today.

There are very few things that a President can do that the Congress does not either have to support on the front end or that the Congress cannot stop on the back end. And Dick talked about playing offense and defense. It isn't right that we have to play defense all the time; we ought to be working together from the beginning. But when we work together at the end of every budget year, we get to play a little offense, because if the President says, "I'm not going to sign this budget, and I'm not going to sign these laws," and they say, "I'll stick with him," then we get to play offense.

But it would be so much better—the point I want to make to the American people is

these folks were right. We now have evidence, we have 6 years of evidence. We were right to put 100,000 police on the street. We were right to drive the deficit down and give us a surplus. We were right to do these things.

And I ask the American people, when these Democrats go back into the field for the 2000 election for the House races and the Senate races, to look at the record of the last 6 years. And I will always accord the Republicans the credit they deserve when we have done things together. But the driving force—the driving force—and the way we came out with the economy, with our crime policy, with our education policy, so many other policies, and the foreign policy we have pursued, came out of these Democrats in the Congress who stayed with me and supported my ideas. And I think they deserve the support of the American people because they're doing the right thing.

And let me be quite specific here and, again, keep the pledge I made at the beginning of the talk. What's all this got to do with what we're doing in Kosovo? The country is working again. And we have now, I would say, both the opportunity and the obligation to say, "Okay, we've got things going right again. Now what do we have to do to have the kind of America and the kind of world we want for our children in this new century? What are the big challenges?" You might ask yourself that when you leave here, what do you think they are.

Here are what I consider to be the big five, if you will, and what I hope the 2000 elections will be about, unless we can resolve more of them between now and then, which we're working to do.

Number one, we must deal with the aging of America. The number of folks over 65 will double by 2030. There will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. The older I get, the better that problem looks. [*Laughter*] This is a very high-class problem faced by all wealthy societies. But unless you deal with it in a responsible way, you run the risk that, when all of us baby boomers retire, we impose big burdens on our kids and their ability to raise

our grandkids. And instead, there is an enormous opportunity here for those of us, anybody that lives to be 65 now has already got a life expectancy of about 82 years—if you get to be 65 in decent health. So this is an enormous opportunity, but we have to re-think our whole way of dealing with these things.

Number two, we have to do more to balance work and family, both because there are more single parent households and there are far more households in which both parents are working, where there are two parents. But there is no more important job in the world than raising children right.

And we have to admit that while America has done a lot of things better than other countries—we have generated more jobs; we've got lower unemployment, we've done great—we have not done enough to balance work and family. And too many parents, every day in this country, have to make decisions about health care, about child care, about time off work, all kinds of challenges that, in my judgment, we could alleviate and still have a very strong economy, indeed, strengthen our economy if we did it in the right way.

Number three, we need to have an economy that leaves no one behind, nobody responsible enough to work. I am encouraged that finally, all income groups have their incomes rising. I'm encouraged that there are cities like Detroit where the unemployment rate has gone down. But you know as well as I do that in most of the big urban areas of this country there are still huge parts of the cities where there has been no new investment and where unemployment is still high. There are many medium-sized industrial cities that have had more trouble changing their economy than the larger cities have. There are many small towns and rural areas in my home State and many other places, from Appalachia to the Mississippi Delta to south Texas, where there are problems.

You want to know how we're going to keep the economy growing with low inflation? Get more investment in the underdeveloped areas of America. That's our biggest untapped market.

Number four, we have to have a way of continuing to improve the environment and

continuing to grow the economy. Our administration has spent, I think, probably more time and effort trying to pursue both these goals and reconcile them, not always to the satisfaction of everybody in this room or this country, but we have really made an effort. Why? Because I think if the country ever gets in a position where we really are making a choice between whether we're going to preserve the global environment or have our kids breathe clean air or drink safe water and seeing our economy grow, we're going to be in a terrible position.

The developments in technology have given us more and more opportunities to find ways to both improve the economy and the environment. But I think—I predict to you that it will be a huge challenge for our country and our world for the next 20 to 30 years.

And the fifth thing is that we have to learn how to reconcile unity and diversity at home and around the world.

Now, what does that mean in practical terms? On the aging in America, we've got a plan. We, the Democrats, have a plan. Set aside 62 percent of the surplus to make sure Social Security will be all right until 2055. And make some other modest changes in the Social Security program that will enable us to lift the earnings limit on people on Social Security, so those who want to work will be able to do so and contribute to our country, and that will enable us to do something for the elderly women who are living alone. Their poverty rate is twice the regular poverty rate.

On Medicare, set aside 15 percent of the surplus, run the Medicare Trust Fund out at least 20 years, and finally begin to provide a prescription drug benefit to seniors on Medicare. It will cost money in the short run. It will save lives and save money in the long run because it will keep more people out of hospitals, more people out of procedures, and it will improve the quality of life. It will keep more people well. So that's our program. We also have a tax credit for long-term care. I think this is very, very important.

Finally, we have what I think is the right sort of tax cut. Our USA accounts would basically give tax credits and matching funds for about 12 percent of the surplus to working families to set up their own pensions.

When Social Security was started, it was always assumed that you would have Social Security, and then people would get a pension at work, and then they would have some private savings. Well, today, a lot of people live on just Social Security. More and more pensions are shifting from defined benefit plans to defined contribution plans. And the personal savings rate in America is way down.

So what we propose to do is to say to people: Families with incomes up to \$80,000, you can get a tax credit and some matching funds from the Government to set up a private savings plan for your retirement; up to \$100,000 you can get tax credits but not matching funds; over \$100,000, if you have no present private pension fund, you can still qualify.

We haven't tried to start a class war here, but you should know that fewer than one-third of the tax benefits associated with retirement in America go to people with incomes of under \$100,000. Fewer than 7 percent of the tax benefits of retirement savings go to people with incomes of \$50,000 a year or less.

So wouldn't it be good, with the stock market having done what it's done, gone from 3,200 to 10,000 in the last six years—I think it would be better if more Americans owned a share of our national wealth. I think it would be better if more working families had some personal savings to go along with their retirement savings and Social Security and whatever they get from a pension plan. And this would be a good thing. That's our program for the aging of America.

When it comes to balancing work and family, we want to do more for child care. We want to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights and do more for health care access. We want to broaden the family and medical leave law some, so that more people are covered by it. It's been immensely successful. I think still today more ordinary citizens come up to me on the street, after all this time, and mention an experience they had, a positive experience because of the family and medical leave law than any other thing we have done, and that's the first bill I signed as President in early 1993.

In terms of leaving no one behind, what's the most important thing we can do? Build

21st century schools everywhere, as you're trying to do here in Detroit. Smaller class sizes with our 100,000 new teachers; modernize school buildings; hook up all the classrooms to the Internet and help all the schools take advantage of it; give more school districts the ability to have after school and summer school programs.

I believe we should have a national change in our policy and end social promotion and require States to turn around failing schools, as Detroit has now taken on the responsibility of doing. But I do not believe children should be branded failures when the system fails them. I do not believe that.

What else can we do to leave no one behind? We can recognize what I just said. A lot of places still haven't really fully participated in the economy. And I have asked the Congress to adopt what I call a 21st century markets initiative to provide for loan guarantees and tax credits to people who will invest in high unemployment areas in America. The same sort of benefits we now give people to invest in low income countries overseas. All I say—I'm for that, by the way. I want us to be good neighbors to Central America. I want them to be good democracies. I don't want us to have problems in the future. They should have a good life. They should be good markets. They can buy our products.

But I say, why shouldn't we have the same incentives for people to invest in the low-income areas of America where people are dying to go to work, dying to start businesses and capable of contributing to our future. We should be for that.

We have a whole livability agenda that the Vice President and I worked up that I think has enormous support, grass-root support among communities in the country to help balance the environment and the economy.

But finally, let me say what I started to say. I've worked hard, as Dick Gephardt said, on this whole issue of race in America. And you remember after the Oklahoma City bombings and there was all this talk about paramilitary operations in America, and I came to Michigan and gave a speech about it, talked about it. I grew up in the segregated South. I grew up with people who were taught not to like people who were different from them.

And if you think about it, it is the oldest negative force in human society. You go back to prehistorical times, people fought each other because they were in different tribes and they were afraid of difference. And sometimes there is a rational basis for it. But in the world we live in, the forces of global economy bringing us closer together, the technological opportunities to share the future with people beyond our immediate reach increasing, our diversity—the diversity you have just here in Detroit in Wayne County—I remember the first time I think when Ed McNamara had me out to the airport dedication—I think it's the first time Dennis or Ed, one told me you had over 140 languages spoken in this county. This is an incredible gift for the future. But it is a gift only if we make a virtue of it.

Now, how do you make a virtue of it? Let's take what's going on in Kosovo. We have Albanian-Americans here, and we have some Serbian-Americans outside demonstrating against us, right? It's okay. That's America. We don't tell people they have to shut up in this country. They can speak their piece and do their thing and be there. But what we have to find is a way to respect our diversity and lift it up and still say what unites us underneath is more important.

And that's what they have to find a way to do in the Balkans, too. And our quarrel there is not with the people of Serbia. Because of the state-run media, most of them don't have any idea what their people did in Kosovo. Most of them don't have a clue about the ethnic cleansing. I mean, people walking around on the street in Belgrade—they don't know, because they have a state-run media, they don't have a free press. So they think it's some political disagreement, and we're just trying to keep their country down.

I have no quarrel with them. The Serbs were our allies in World War II. My quarrel is with Mr. Milosevic and his policies. He has sought to establish the principle that the most important thing in the Balkans is having a greater Serbia. And if you have to kill the Bosnian Muslims and the Croats in Bosnia and the Croats in the Krajina, and then if you have to clean out all of Kosovo and run all the Albanians into Albania and Macedonia

and crush them, most of them Muslim but not all of them, that's okay. I don't think it's okay. I don't think it's okay.

What I want you to think about is, look what we've tried to do in the Middle East. We have tried to be a fair and honest interlocutor in bringing the Palestinians and the Israelis together. We have worked hard, and we have a bill before the Congress now to try to help our friends in Jordan to stabilize their economy and keep being a force for peace.

In Northern Ireland, we've tried to help the Catholics and the Protestants put aside three decades of conflict. Why? Because in a global economy—and Lord knows that if the American people hadn't learned anything in the 20th century, it's that sooner or later, if the world goes haywire, we get pulled into it—World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam. So, increasingly, we have done things to try to get involved to stop things from happening.

Now, this war in Bosnia went a long long time. It went on nearly 3 years before we really got the coalition together among the allies to try to go in and stop it. And by that time, there were over 2 million refugees and about 250,000 people had been killed, lost their lives.

Now, we've had a few thousand people killed and a million-plus refugees in Kosovo. And what I have tried to say to the American people is, this is not some crusade America went off on its own. We've got all of our NATO allies, 19 countries, all believing that this is something that needs to be contained and reversed—not because we have a quarrel with the Serbian people. And I want to point out, I said, I made it absolutely clear that we would not go in there even in a peaceful environment unless it was absolutely clear that our charge in Kosovo was to return all the refugees to their rightful homes and their neighborhoods and their communities, under conditions of peace, and then have a secure environment that would also protect the Serb minority within Kosovo.

What I'm trying to do is to establish a principle here that we have to resolve our differences by force of argument, not by force of arms. And you cannot tell somebody you love the land, but you hate the people that

inhabit it because of their ethnic, their racial, or their religious affiliation.

And if you think about the world we want our kids to live in, and if you think about how we want it to be free of war, free of conflict, there is no way to get there—no way—unless our historic alliance with Europe includes a Europe that is undivided, democratic, and at peace, and unless we are standing for the principle that we're not afraid of people that are different, not just in terms of racial or religious or ethnic differences but in terms of political opinions.

We don't have to be afraid. All we need is a system that gives people a legitimate way to express their grievances, to fight their political battles, and limits the ability of people to oppress each other. And I believe we've done the right thing there.

I cannot tell you how strongly I think that we would feel, no matter what apprehensions you may have in the moment—and I'm quite confident of the ultimate success of our mission—but no matter how many apprehensions you have, ask yourself how you would feel today if I were up here giving this speech, after what we did in Bosnia, after what we stood for in the Middle East and Northern Ireland, after all the work we've done in America to get people to live together across racial and religious lines, after the work we've done to end employment discrimination and to stand against hate crimes, and all the things this administration has stood for and this party has stood for and our people have stood for—how would you feel if I had come here to give this speech today and the headlines were full of all those people being killed and all those people being thrown out of the country, and we were having to explain to people why we couldn't lift a finger to do anything about it?

So life is full of hard decisions, and sometimes the most important things in life are difficult. This has been a difficult period for Dick Gephardt and for Dave Bonior and for John Dingell. For all of us it's been so frustrating these last 6 years, going through this position where we've had to fight so many rearguard actions. But they have grown stronger and deeper and wiser and more determined.

And this is what I want for our country in this moment. We must always keep our hearts and our ears open. We must always be open to the possibility of constructive resolution. But I think that we ought to say, "Look, the 21st century world we want to be a place where people live free of this sort of madness, of hating each other because of their differences." And we have to be free of it in America because we will be the most diverse democracy in the world.

That is what is at stake. And that's why it's good that we're all here today. Because, in the end, the political leadership of the country cannot go where the people will not travel. That's what a democracy is. So it matters what you believe. It matters whether you will support candidates. It matters which candidates you support. And all I can say to you is, I am profoundly grateful to you because you and the people of Michigan have been good to me and to my family and to my Vice President, to our administration.

You have been good to the Members of Congress that are here. And we have tried in turn to do things that were good for America and good for Michigan. We face big challenges. But if you look at the record of the last 6 years, two things should come forth: Number one, you should be very optimistic about the future; but number two, you should be willing to make tough decisions and be firmly in the camp of those who are committed to what is truly in the best interest of the children of this State and this country. They I have come to stand with today, and I'm very proud to be here with them and with you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in the ballroom at the Fairlane Club. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Debbie Stabenow; former Senator Donald W. Riegle, Jr.; former State Attorney General Frank J. Kelley; former Gov. James J. Blanchard; State Attorney General Jennifer M. Granholm; Mayor Stanley Woodrow of Flint, MI; and Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI; Representative Patrick J. Kennedy, chairman, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Wayne County Executive Edward H. McNamara; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks to Humanitarian Relief Organizations in Roseville, Michigan
April 16, 1999

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you, Dean, for your work and your introduction. Mr. Mayor, thank you for making us feel welcome. I'd like to thank Hattie Babbitt and James Lee Witt, Eric Schwartz, and the other members of our humanitarian team at the Federal Government level for being here with me today.

I thought the youth choir was magnificent. I think we should give them another hand. *[Applause]* Thank you. I'd like to thank the Members of the Michigan delegation who are here—Congressman Dingell—we just left his district—Congressman Levin, Congressman Kildee, Congresswoman Stabenow. I thank Congressman Patrick Kennedy from Rhode Island who has joined us today, and a special word of thanks to our leader, Dick Gephardt, and to your Congressman, Dave Bonior, for their leadership and support in this important endeavor.

I know many people here have very strong feelings about the conflict in Kosovo. In a moment I will meet with a few families who have relatives there. Later tonight, 50 reservists from the area will go to France to support Allied Force. I'm going from here to Selfridge Air National Guard Base to thank the people there for their service to America and the cause of peace.

The Detroit area has a large number of Albanian-Americans, roughly 40,000. Many here today are from here, in Roseville, from Armada, from other communities in the region. Many of you have loved ones in Kosovo, relatives, friends, kicked out of their homes under pain of death. Our hearts and our prayers, our aid and our arms are with you today.

But I also want to point out, so as to make the larger point of my remarks, that America is proud to be the home to a large community of Serbian-Americans, many of them living in the midwest, Michigan, Ohio, other places. I believe overwhelmingly they want a democratic Serbia that is a part of Europe, not apart from it. I say that because I think it is very important that the American people not develop some negative feeling or bias

against Serbian-Americans, or even the Serbian people themselves, because most of them don't even know what has been done in their name in Kosovo, because the state-run media has covered it up.

I say that to make the larger point. We just came, as I said, from a meeting in Representative Dingell's district where we had Albanian-Americans who were inside meeting with me, and Serbian-Americans who were outside demonstrating against me. And I said that was good, because that was the American way. That is not Mr. Milosevic's way. And that's the point I want to make. Our quarrel is not with the Serbs in Serbia; it is not with the Serbs in Kosovo; it is not with Serbian-Americans; it is with the leadership of a person who believes it is all right to kill people and to uproot them and to destroy their family records and to erase any record of their presence in a land simply because of their ethnic heritage.

Most but not all are Muslims. So there is an element of religious conflict here as well. But it is not entirely that. And as I have said repeatedly and I'd like to say one more time, the battle we see in Kosovo today is the harshest example at the moment of what we have seen in Bosnia, what we saw in the slaughter, the tribal slaughter in Rwanda, what we see in the still-unresolved but hopefully about to be resolved conflict in Northern Ireland, what we see in the Middle East. We have come to the end of the cold war. People, by and large, have rejected communism. And we now see the prospect of a bright new future for the world in which we can resolve our differences in an orderly way and build a common future—that future threatened by the oldest problem of human society, our tendency to fear and dehumanize people who are different from ourselves.

And that is why the United States is in Kosovo; that and the fact that the practical significance of that war there could spread across all the Balkans, all of Southeast Europe, and threaten everything we want for our children in the 21st century world.

I have been very moved by the response of the American people to this crisis. Our men and women in uniform have performed superbly. So many thousands of Americans

have donated money and supplies. I was telling our folks before we came in, right after Easter Sunday the minister of the church that Hillary and I attend in Washington called and said, just on the spur of the moment he had called for an Easter offering for the refugees. And without any prior announcement in a church that is largely quite a middle class church, he raised \$15,000. And he was so proud of that.

Mr. Witt just told me about a person calling in to our 1-800 number and pledging \$1,000 and then calling the next day and said that he'd wrestled with it all night long, and he realized he hadn't given enough, and he wanted to give another \$1,000. So the heart of America has been engaged by this.

Many hardworking Americans have lent their time and energy to provide food and shelter. Some work for international organizations, like the Red Cross; some work for small NGO's and local charities, including some of the Albanian-American groups represented here today. Some are affiliated with the United States military or NATO, who are also working very hard on the humanitarian issues now. We in the United States, through our Government, have contributed \$150 million to humanitarian relief since last year. We've sent more troops to Albania and Macedonia to distribute supplies. We provide now over a million daily rations, over 50,000 blankets, 1,000 tents, tens of thousands of water jugs because dehydration is a terrible, terrible problem now.

I have directed our Defense Department to build a new refugee facility in Albania for up to 20,000 people, to help preserve lives, health, in hope of return. We will do the most we can also to make sure that the innocent families trapped within Kosovo do not go hungry, unprotected, or forgotten.

You know, this is a sad chapter, as was Bosnia, in an otherwise remarkable period of Europe in the last decade of this century: the fall of the Berlin Wall; the peaceful reunification of Germany; the enlargement of NATO to include Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic; our partnerships with Russia, Ukraine and two dozen other countries; the increasing unification of Western Europe economically and politically. It all gave us the chance on the continent where the two

World Wars began to build a Europe that was peaceful, undivided, and at peace for the first time in history.

And as I said, it is truly ironic that as we look toward a future where we want every classroom connected to the Internet, all the peoples of the world drawing closer together culturally and economically, that this entire vision is threatened by the most primitive of all human weaknesses, the fear and the tendency to hate those who are different from ourselves.

Now, this is a challenge we still face within the United States. The Mayor of Detroit said at our previous meeting that in Wayne County there are over 150 different languages spoken—140 different languages and ethnic groups. Michigan looks very different than it did when Mr. Dingell first went to Congress over 40 years ago. Macomb County looks different than it did when people said in the 1980's that it was the mirror image of emerging America. It probably is but in a very different way today. Mr. Bonior, himself, has Ukrainian and Polish roots. In this congressional district, you have not only those who are here, you have Italian-Americans, Belgian-Americans, Asian-Americans, African-Americans, Latinos.

We have to say to ourselves as well as to the rest of the world, that there will be a great contest for the next several years between the forces bringing us together and the forces tearing us apart, between our commitment to empower people and those who would suppress them, between the idea that we can only find unity with people who are just like us and the idea that life is richer in every way, not just materially, when people can celebrate their own convictions and their own ethnic heritage and their own religious faiths and still reaffirm their common humanity and draw up a set of rules which permit us all to live together, to pursue our faith, and pursue our humanity.

That is why we are in Kosovo, and that is why we must work here at home.

Now, I just want to make one other point. I tried to make it yesterday to the newspaper editors in San Francisco, and I want you here who have roots in the region to support our elected officials and to remind us of this. For the moment, we are caught up in a conflict

in which we have clear objectives: We want the refugees back in; we want the Serbian forces out; we want an international security force to protect the people, including the Serb minority in Kosovo, as they work toward self-determination. Our objectives are clear, and for the moment we must focus on that.

But we must be thinking about tomorrow, the tomorrow when the conflict is over, the tomorrow when the Kosovars are home. Now, what kind of future do we want? Do we want a future where every ethnic group is confined in smaller and smaller and denser and denser pieces of land, and then, just to be secure, they must be a separate country? Or do we want a future in the Balkans and in Southeastern Europe where they can do what we are struggling to do here in America, where, yes, people can have their own heritage and their own faith and their own traditions, but they are a part of a larger effort to share a bigger future?

I think the answer is clear. If you want people to give up the misery of yesterday, you must give them the hope of a better tomorrow. And that is what we have to focus on. After World War II, that's what we did for Germany, our adversary, as well as France and Great Britain, our allies. After the cold war, we reached out to Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic with economic and other aid. We reached out to Ukraine and to Russia to try to help to deal with the nuclear problems, to try to help them get started again. And if you look at the success of Central Europe, it's hard to say that it wasn't the right decision.

But if you look at the Balkans and Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, if you look at all these countries in Southeastern Europe, we have to say when the fighting is over and the Kosovars go home, what will Albanians, Serbs, Bosnians, Macedonians—how will they live? What will they do? What happens the next day? Will we have another decade where people carry around all this hatred in their heart, and every time they turn a corner in every little village, they look to see who lives on this corner and what they did to them? Or will we challenge them and help

them to be involved in a bigger, brighter future?

So I ask you, all of you here today, who have been so involved in this, we must do for Southeastern Europe, including the Balkans, what was done for Central Europe after the cold war, and for the battleground nations of Europe after World War II.

This is our competing vision. Mr. Milosevic's vision: greater Serbia, enforced by paramilitary thugs and propaganda, denying the humanity of people who do not fall within his ethnic group. But our version is democracy, messy sometimes, yes; votes and arguments and disagreements and demonstrations and religious differences and ethnic differences; but recognizing that it is better to work together for a brighter tomorrow because, underneath, our common humanity is more important than anything that divides us; that we are all the children of God. And it is hard to imagine that God would have ordained the construction of any religion or political philosophy which would justify the extinction of another of God's children simply because of their religious, racial, or ethnic background. It is a very simple statement.

So I thank you for being here. I thank you for your loyalty to your loved ones back home. I ask you to help me in making sure that in this difficult period we do not diminish the humanity of any group of Americans, including the Serbian-Americans, that we go out there and tell the world what we're trying to fight for is the fundamental dignity and integrity of all people and a system of democracy and cooperation which gives all of our children a better tomorrow.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:11 p.m. in the gymnasium at the Roseville Recreation Center. In his remarks, he referred to Albanian-Islamic Center spokesman Dean Shaska, who introduced the President; Mayor Gerald K. Alsip of Roseville; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to the Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit choir.

Proclamation 7185—National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week, 1999

April 16, 1999

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Organ donation is one of humanity's most noble expressions of compassion and generosity. It reflects the extraordinary selflessness of the donor and gives the recipient a second chance to experience life's abundant blessings.

For many people across our country, receiving an organ or tissue transplant means relief from suffering and a marked improvement in the quality of their lives. For others, it literally means the difference between life and death. And the demand for such donations continues to grow. In the last six years, the number of people on the national organ transplant list has doubled, from more than 30,000 in 1993 to more than 62,000 patients today. A new name is added to that list every 18 seconds.

Fortunately, thanks to remarkable medical breakthroughs, each of us has the power to improve these troubling statistics. In December of 1997, Vice President Gore and Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Donna Shalala launched the National Organ and Tissue Donation Initiative to raise awareness of the successes of transplantation and to educate our citizens about the urgent and continuing need for organ and tissue donations. Building on this effort, the Health Care Financing Administration now requires hospitals participating in Medicaid and Medicare to notify organ procurement organizations of all deaths and imminent deaths at their facilities and to train their personnel to discuss donation with the families of potential donors. Judging from the positive impact of similar legislation in Pennsylvania, we anticipate that this new Federal regulation will substantially increase the number of donations throughout the country.

Becoming a donor is simple, requiring only that we complete and carry a donor card and inform our families and friends about our wish to donate. This second step is a critical

one because, according to a new study issued by HHS, almost all Americans would agree to donate their loved one's tissue or organs if they knew their loved one had requested it. Fewer than half would consent if they did not know their loved one's wishes.

During National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week, I urge all Americans to become potential donors. By doing so, we can bring new hope and improved lives to thousands of our fellow citizens and hasten the day when no American on the organ transplant waiting list loses the race against time.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 18 through April 24, 1999, as National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week. I urge all health care professionals, educators, the media, public and private organizations concerned with organ donation and transplantation, the clergy, and all Americans to join me in promoting greater awareness and acceptance of this humanitarian action.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:51 a.m., April 20, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 21.

Proclamation 7186—National Volunteer Week, 1999

April 16, 1999

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Helping others—and helping others help themselves—through volunteer work is a great American tradition. Our Nation's dedicated volunteers come from all walks of life, all races, and all ages. Whether they support

their communities through their churches, synagogues, or other religious institutions, serve full-time as AmeriCorps members, or spend a few hours a week helping out organizations or individuals in need, America's volunteers are bringing hope and help to their fellow citizens and building a stronger, more compassionate Nation for us all.

Our volunteers know that service is one of the best ways to make a difference in the lives of others—and they are proving that Americans at any stage of life can serve. Thousands of older Americans donate their time to serve as foster grandparents, senior companions, and as part of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and other initiatives. As many as 13 million young Americans aged 12 to 17 also volunteer each year, improving their communities, broadening their educational experiences, developing new skills, and increasing their understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship. This week, during National Youth Service Day, young people across our country will participate in service activities and demonstrate with their good works the power of youth to strengthen our Nation.

Volunteers will become increasingly vital to our society as we enter a new millennium. We cannot rely solely on charitable contributions or government programs to address the challenges we see in our communities. Each of us must find our own role and take action as a volunteer, a neighbor, and a citizen. We must work together to ensure that every child has a caring adult in his or her life, a safe place in which to live and grow, a good school to attend, a healthy start in life, and a chance to serve the community. We must continually strive to bring hope and hard work to bear on the human problems we see every day. With warm hearts and willing hands, we can make a lasting difference.

During this week, let us renew our spirit of community, our sense of idealism, and our commitment to service. Let us also honor the invaluable work of the thousands of voluntary, civic, religious, school, and neighborhood groups across our country that are leading the way by serving their fellow Americans and improving the quality of life for us all.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,
President of the United States of America,

by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 18 through April 24, 1999, as National Volunteer Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities to express appreciation to the volunteers among us for their commitment to service and to encourage the spirit of volunteerism in our families and communities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:51 a.m., April 20, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 21.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

April 12

In the morning, the President traveled to Barksdale Air Force Base, LA. Later, he met with tornado victims from Shreveport, LA, at Hoban Hall.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. In the evening, he met with congressional leaders in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to nominate Delmond J.H. Won to be a Commissioner of the Federal Maritime Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jody L. Williams to serve as a member of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission.

The White House announced that the President spoke on April 10 to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan concerning the situation in the Balkans.

April 13

In the evening, the President had dinner with President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain in the Yellow Oval Room.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert J. Einhorn to be Assistant Secretary for Nonproliferation at the State Department.

April 14

The President announced his intention to appoint Rita Bass, Norma Lee Funger, Mary French (Muffy) Moore, and Yeni Wong as members to the President's Advisory Committee on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Carolyn S. Brody, J. Carter Brown, Eden Donohue Rafshoon, and Harry G. Robinson III to the Commission on Fine Arts.

The President announced the appointment of Arnold Donald, Carolee Friedlander, James Kelly, and John Sandner as members of the President's Export Council.

The President also announced his intention to appoint William Crowell as a member of the President's Export Council.

April 15

In the morning the President traveled to San Francisco, CA, and in the evening, he traveled to Detroit, MI.

The President announced his intent to nominate Joseph F. Baca and Robert N. Baldwin as members of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute.

April 16

In the evening, the President traveled to Boston, MA. Later, he attended a Majority 2000 dinner at a private residence in Westin, MA. Later, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intent to nominate John R. Hamilton to be Ambassador to Peru.

The President announced his intention to nominate Frank Almaguer to be Ambassador to Honduras.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald W. Keyser for the rank of Ambassador as Special Negotiator for Nagorno-Karabakh and New Independent States Regional Conflicts.

**Nominations
Submitted to the Senate**

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted April 12

David L. Goldwyn,
of the District of Columbia to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (International Affairs), vice Robert Wayne Gee.

John T. Hanson,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Public and Intergovernmental Affairs), vice Kathy Elena Jurado, resigned.

Delmond J.H. Won,
of Hawaii, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner for the term expiring June 30, 2002 (reappointment).

Submitted April 13

Robert J. Einhorn,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Non-proliferation) (new position).

**Checklist
of White House Press Releases**

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released April 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of Defense William Cohen and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Henry H. Shelton, USA, on the situation in the Balkans

Statement by the Press Secretary on the verdict in the Susan McDougal trial

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's telephone conversation with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the situation in the Balkans

Released April 13

Transcript of a press briefing by the Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President and Mrs. Clinton's 1998 Federal tax return

Released April 14

Transcript of a press briefing by the Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling

and Deputy Treasury Secretary Larry Summers on the Universal Savings Accounts initiative

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of Commerce Bill Daley on Census 2000

Released April 15

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger following up on the President's remarks to the American Society of Newspaper Editors

Released April 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency James Lee Witt, Agency for International Development Deputy Administrator Hattie Babbitt, and NSC Director for Multilateral Affairs Eric Schwartz on the humanitarian situation in the Balkans

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved April 9¹

H.R. 193 / Public Law 106-20
Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Wild and Scenic River Act

¹ This Public Law was not received in time for inclusion in the appropriate issue.